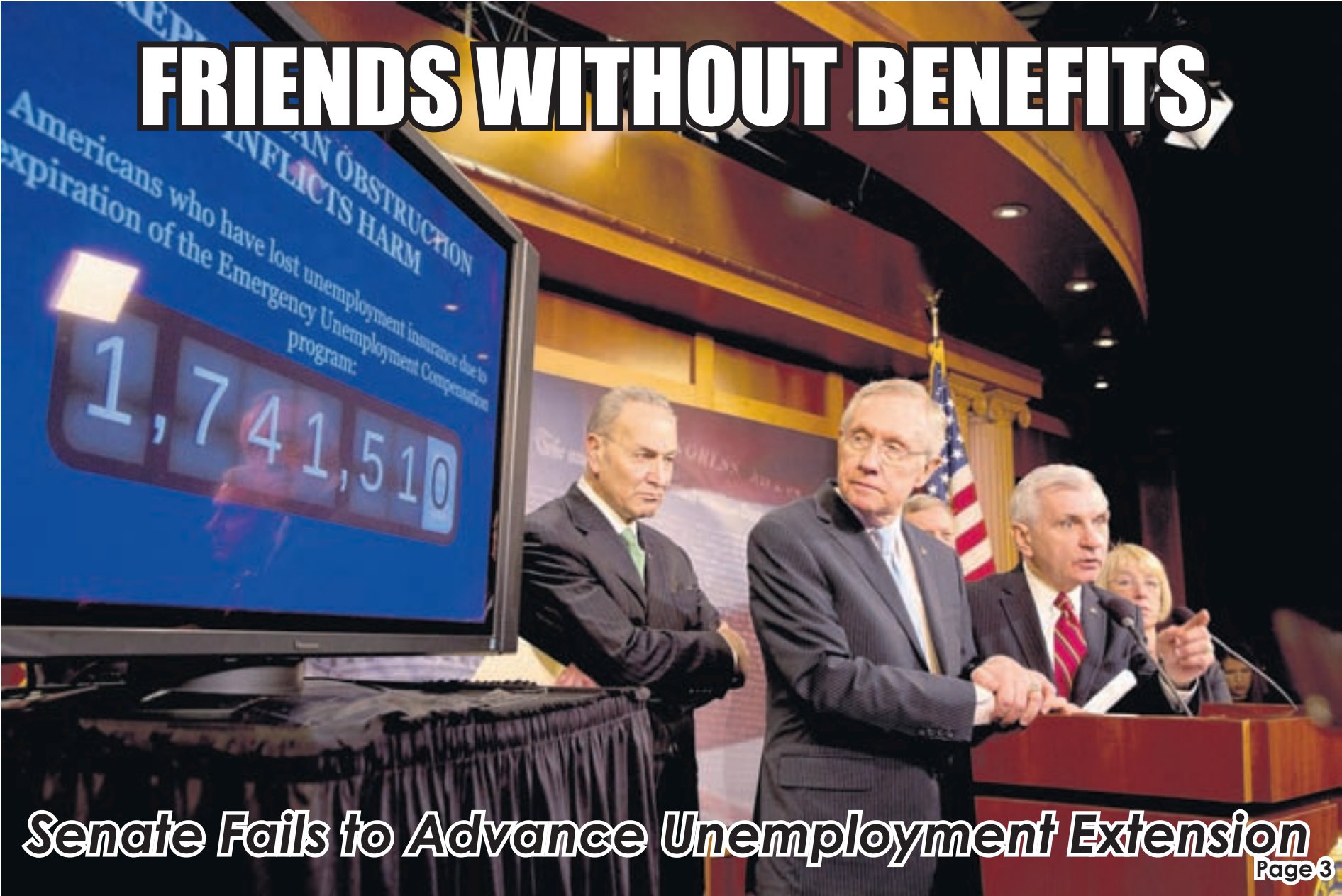


# FRIENDS WITHOUT BENEFITS



## Senate Fails to Advance Unemployment Extension

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Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) looks at a count of Americans affected by the loss of long-term unemployment benefits, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Feb. 6, 2014. The Senate held a vote on a three-month extension of benefits but the 55-42 vote fell five short of breaking the threat of a Republican filibuster. From left: Sens. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), Reid, Jack Reed (D-R.I.) and Patty Murray (D-Wash.)

(Stephen Crowley/The New York Times)



GEERT WILDERS  
MAKES HIS CASE  
FOR EURO EXIT

Page 2



BANNED ITEMS  
SLIP THROUGH  
SOCHI SECURITY

Page 9



# Aruba's

## 60th ANNIVERSARY OF Carnival



# Dutch politician puts case for EU exit

**TOBY STERLING**  
**Associated Press**

**THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)** — In a foretaste of his campaign for European parliamentary elections in May, Dutch populist politician Geert Wilders is making his case that the Netherlands would be better off leaving the European Union. He claimed Thursday a "NExit" — Netherlands exit from both the European Union and euro currency zone — would add nearly 10,000 euros (\$13,000) to GDP per capita over two decades, from around 35,000 euros now. The Dutch government re-

in the Netherlands, and are seen as practically unworkable. However, his euro-skeptic stance, like that of other parties elsewhere on the political extremes — such as France's Marine Le Pen, Greece's Alexis Tsipras and Britain's Nigel Farage, does resonate with a wider public. A survey published last week by pollster Maurice de Hond found almost as many Dutch would vote for Wilders' Freedom Party as for the two parties in the centrist governing coalition combined — if national elections were held today. They are not scheduled until 2017. Wilders said

central bank to tailor monetary policy to better suit the country, Capital Economics analyst Mark Pragnell said. "We think the Swiss option is viable for the Netherlands," Pragnell said, referring to Switzerland's good bilateral relations and trade with the European Union, even as it conducts its own monetary policy. It is not clear that the Netherlands would be able to negotiate the same deals Switzerland has. Many would find it difficult to imagine the European Union without the Netherlands, one of its founding members and traditionally



Dutch populist politician Geert Wilders presents a study that concludes there would be significant positive economic effects from leaving the EU during a press conference in The Hague, Netherlands, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2014. Wilders claimed Thursday the 'NExit', or Netherlands exit study published Thursday, suggests that exit from the union would add nearly 10,000 euros (\$13,000) to GDP per capita over two decades. (AP Photo/Patrick Post)

jects Wilders' views, saying a pullout from the European Union would cause irreparable damage to trade relations in a country heavily reliant on trade, and a euro departure would lead to a new financial crisis. "I cannot explain to any voters in the Netherlands that we have to raise taxes, cut health care for the elderly, for example, but that we send billions of euros to the Southern European countries (for bailouts), or all the fees we pay to Brussels," Wilders said at a press conference outside Dutch parliament. Wilders' views on leaving the European Union have so far gained little traction

he hoped that his faction would be the largest Dutch faction in the European elections. At the press conference, Wilders presented a study that concluded there would be significant positive economic effects from leaving the EU. He commissioned the study from the London-based think-tank Capital Economics, founded by the Euroskeptic economist Roger Bootle. The study concluded that the Dutch economy would benefit from no longer contributing to the EU budget. On a per-capita basis, the Dutch are among the highest net contributors. Second, leaving the euro would enable the Dutch

a strong supporter of the union. But Wilders called the report's result "the best news for the Netherlands in years." "It offers the Netherlands a way out of this crisis," he said. Dutch GDP has scarcely grown since the start of the 2008 financial crisis, due in part to a sharp fall in housing prices, though most economists forecast a modest return to growth in 2014. Unemployment is around 7 percent and rising, and many Dutch are unhappy with the government's austerity policies, after years of painful spending cuts and tax hikes.

## LATIN & CARIBBEAN BRIEFS

### Branson gets green energy pledges

**MOSKITO ISLAND, British Virgin Islands (AP)** — British billionaire Richard Branson said Thursday several small Caribbean islands have committed to working with his renewable energy nonprofit. Branson made the announcement on the last day of a three-day meeting of political and business leaders on his private isle in the British Virgin Islands. The CEO and founder of the Virgin Group said "it's time for governments to cut through all the red tape" and slash their dependence on fossil fuels. Soaring power costs and energy security are major concerns in the Caribbean. □

### Police reporter kidnapped in Mexico

**VERACRUZ, Mexico (AP)** — Mexican authorities on Thursday said gunmen kidnapped a police beat reporter from his home in Veracruz state, where at least a dozen journalists have been slain or gone missing since 2010. Veracruz state prosecutors say police and Mexican marines are searching for reporter Gregorio Jimenez. The newspaper Notisur says Jimenez's wife and other witnesses reported that at least five masked gunmen broke into his home in the city of Coatzacoalcas on Wednesday, dragged him out and drove him away in a gray SUV. □

### Panama helicopter crashes, 1 killed

**PANAMA CITY (AP)** — A police helicopter has crashed during an anti-drug operation in Panama and officials say at least one person is dead. Among the seven injured is Belsio Gonzales, who's the head of Panama's naval aviation service. President Ricardo Martinelli says the helicopter was over the Caribbean chasing a vessel suspected of carrying illicit drugs on Thursday. The president says sacks of presumed drugs were found, and the boat as well. But those aboard the vessel have not been captured. Officials have not said what caused the chopper to fall. □

### Puerto Rico judge son gets 109 years

**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)** — The son of a U.S. district court judge has been sentenced to 109 years in prison for killing his wife in Puerto Rico. Pablo Casellas told a judge on Thursday that he was innocent and that the sentence was an injustice. He was found guilty Jan. 22 on charges including murder, weapons offenses and destroying evidence. His wife, 46-year-old Carmen Paredes, was killed July 2012 at their home in a wealthy suburb. She was shot multiple times, including once in the forehead. Casellas is the son of U.S. District Court Judge Salvador Casellas. □

### Prosecutor: Interrogate Argentine VP

**BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP)** — Argentina's vice president and its top tax collector are one step closer to being charged or absolved in a corruption case. A federal prosecutor said Thursday evidence supports requiring the testimony by Vice President Amado Boudou, tax agency director Ricardo Etchegaray and at least nine others accused of taking over the company that prints Argentina's pesos. The bankrupt printer was sold off to a shell company linked to the vice president after he and Etchegaray intervened to lower its tax debts. Both officials deny any wrongdoing. □

# Obama declares more work to do to rebuild Haiti

**DARLENE SUPERVILLE**

**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Four years after a powerful earthquake devastated Haiti, President Barack Obama on Thursday praised the rebound taking place in the impoverished Caribbean nation but said there is more work to be done. He pledged that America will remain a partner in that process. At the start of his first official meeting with Haitian President Michel Martelly, Obama also said he was encouraged by progress Haiti has taken to remove "political roadblocks" to holding legislative and local elections that are two years overdue. Obama said the "good news" is that U.S. and other aid that flowed to

Haiti after the January 2010 earthquake, along with Martelly's leadership

and the will of the Haitian people, "we've begun to see progress." The 7.0

earthquake, centered just west of the capital of Port-au-Prince, killed an

estimated 300,000 people and left 1.5 million others without permanent homes. "The economy is growing. Security is improving. Infrastructure is getting rebuilt. Rubble has been removed," Obama said from the Oval Office as he and Martelly sat side by side in separate chairs. "Health facilities are beginning to open up. Schools are starting to get back into place, and businesses are starting to return to Haiti." "It's been a very slow and difficult process, and I think we are all recognizing that we have a lot more work to do," Obama added. "But my main message today to the president and to the people of Haiti is that the American people are committed to standing with you in this process." □



President Barack Obama and Haiti President Michel Martelly talk during a photo opportunity in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2014.

(AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

# Senate fails to advance unemployment extension

**JEREMY W. PETERS**

**© 2014 New York Times**

**WASHINGTON** - The Senate failed to move forward on a three-month extension of assistance for the long-term unemployed Thursday, leaving it unlikely that Congress would approve the measure soon and dealing a setback to President Barack Obama's economic agenda. The vote was 55-42, falling short of the 60-vote threshold to break a Republican filibuster effort. Republicans and Democrats, many from the nation's most economically depressed states, had been trying to reach a solution that would allow people who have exhausted their unemployment insurance to continue receiving benefits as long as the government offset the \$6 billion cost. Ultimately, how to pay for the program proved too big a hurdle for senators to overcome. "We've given them everything they wanted. Paid for," said Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., the majority leader, flashing his irritation at Republicans who blocked the bill. He said Democrats would

keep pushing to extend the benefits, which expired at the end of last year, leaving more than 1.3 million Americans cut off. That number has since grown to more than 1.7 million. Democrats hope to turn the issue into an election-year cudgel and have been blaming Republicans for ignoring people who are out of work. Republicans have balked at that as political smoke. "We know it's a political game," said Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah. "We know they'd like to bring it up every three months and bash Republicans with it." Obama has repeatedly pressed Congress to extend the program, an emergency measure enacted during the recession to provide up to 47 weeks of supplemental payments to the long-term unemployed. But even if the Senate had moved forward, getting any extension through the Republican-controlled House was going to be considerably difficult. Speaker John A. Boehner, R-Ohio, has said he would entertain a bill only if it were paid for and could

stimulate job growth. Some of his more conservative members, who said the extension would only create more debt for future generations to deal with,

were even more hesitant. "The perception that I get from the Senate right now is, 'Times are tough. We should make times tougher on our kids to make it easier

on us, and then feel better,'" said Rep. James Lankford, R-Okla. "And I think that's just not a philosophy I'm willing to support." □

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## Utilities scramble to restore power across Northeast

**MARK SCOLFORO**

**Associated Press**

**HARRISBURG, Pennsylvania**

**(AP)** — Hundreds of thousands of Americans spent a second chilly day without electricity Thursday as utility crews from as far away as Canada and Arkansas scrambled to restore power lost when a heavy coating of ice took down trees and limbs in the mid-Atlantic. State officials likened the scope of the damage to a hurricane.

Some who might not get power back for several days sought warmth — or at least somewhere to recharge their batteries — in shopping malls, public libraries and hastily established shelters.

Nearly a half-million customers were without electricity Thursday, the vast majority of them in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett said after an aerial survey of the storm's aftermath that crews put a priority on restoring electricity to hospitals and nursing homes, and to communications facilities and sewer plants.

"This storm is in some respects as bad or maybe even worse than Hurricane Sandy," he said during an appearance in the Philadelphia suburbs. He said a shipment of electrical generators from the federal government was on its way to Pennsylvania.

PECO, the dominant elec-

tricity provider in the Philadelphia area, had the most outages with 395,000. PECO spokeswoman Debra Yemenijian most would have their lights back on by Friday night, but she said some could be without

(30 centimeters) of snow in some places on Wednesday, forcing schools, businesses and government offices to close, snarling air travel and sending cars and trucks sliding on slippery roads and highways

FirstEnergy. "It's that weight that crushes our equipment. Multiply that by hundreds of locations."

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission said late Thursday afternoon that about 414,000 customers



**A worker clears branches around an ice covered power line after a winter storm with freezing rain downed trees and left thousands without electricity, in Finksburg, Md.**

**(AP Photo/Carroll County Times, Dave Munch)**

power until Sunday.

About 200 people took advantage of seven shelters in three suburban Philadelphia counties, according to the American Red Cross of Southeastern Pennsylvania. Shelters also were open in central Pennsylvania.

The U.S. Northeast's second winter storm of the week dumped more than a foot

— an all-too-familiar litany of misery in a winter where the storms seem to be tripping over each other.

What made this one stand out was the thick coating of ice it left on trees and power lines.

"Many of them already had a coating of snow on them," said Mark Durbin, a spokesman for the utility

remained without power, down by several hundred thousand from Wednesday and falling over the course of the day. After PECO, FirstEnergy had about 42,000 outages in central Pennsylvania and PPL had 14,000 in eastern Pennsylvania. Some 53,000 Maryland power customers were in the dark. □

## House leader: Immigration bill Passage tough

**DONNA CASSATA**

**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The

leader of the U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday all but ruled out passage of immigration legislation before this November's elections, saying it would be difficult for the Republican-led House to act on the issue that President Barack Obama has made a top domestic priority.

In his most pessimistic comments, Speaker John Boehner blamed the stalemate on widespread skepticism that Obama would properly enforce any immigration reforms that Congress approved. The Republican leader didn't mention that his own members have balked at acting on the contentious issue, which could enrage core conservative voters in the congressional election year.

"The American people, including many of our members, don't trust that the reform we're talking about will be implemented as it was intended to be," Boehner told reporters at his weekly news conference. "The president seems to change the health care law on a whim, whenever he likes."

Now, he is running around the country telling everyone he's going to keep acting on his own. □



# White House sees Russian hand in envoy's bugged call



White House press secretary Jay Carney briefs reporters at the White House in Washington, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2014. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

**MATTHEW LEE**  
AP Diplomatic Writer  
WASHINGTON (AP) —

U.S. officials say they suspect Russia is behind the leak of an apparently bugged phone conversation about Ukraine between two senior American diplomats in which they make disparaging comments about the European Union.

The officials noted that an aide to Russian deputy prime minister, Dmitry Rogozin, was among the first to tweet about a YouTube video that contains audio of the alleged call between the top US diplomat for Europe, Victoria Nuland, and the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt. The video, which shows photos of Nuland and Pyatt, is subtitled in Russian.

In the audio, voices resembling those of Nuland and Pyatt discuss

international efforts to resolve Ukraine's ongoing political crisis. At one point, the Nuland voice colorfully suggests that the EU's position should be ignored. "F--- the EU," the female voice said.

In the tweet, posted some seven hours before existence of the video became widely known on Thursday, the Rogozin aide, Dmitry Loskutov, opined: "Sort of controversial judgment from Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland speaking about the EU."

White House spokesman Jay Carney pointed to the tweet and Russia's clear interest in what has become a struggle between pro-Moscow and pro-Western camps in the former Soviet Republic, but declined to comment on the source of the audio.

"I would say that since

the video was first noted and tweeted out by the Russian government, I think it says something about Russia's role," Carney told reporters. He would not comment on the substance of the conversation, in which the Nuland and Pyatt voices also discuss their opinion of various Ukrainian opposition figures. A State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to publicly discuss the matter, said the audio sounds like an authentic recording of a call that occurred last week.

State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said that if the Russians were responsible for listening to, recording and posting a private diplomatic telephone conversation, it would be "a

new low in Russian tradecraft."

Pressed on whether the call was authentic, Psaki said: "I didn't say it was inauthentic."

Psaki said Nuland "has been in contact with her EU counterparts and of course has apologized for these reported comments." The YouTube video was posted on Feb. 4 and is titled the "Marionettes of Maidan" in Russian. Maidan is the name of the main square in the Ukrainian capital of Kiev, which has become the center of opposition protests. It contains Russian-language subtitling of the conversation, raising suspicions that it was posted by a Russia-friendly source.

The practice of eavesdropping on the phone calls of other governments -- even between allies -- was the first diplomatic fallout from the publication of documents taken by former National Security Agency analyst Edward Snowden. The documents he took, and published in such newspapers as The Washington Post, the New York Times and The Guardian, showed that the United States listened in to the phone calls of allies such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Merkel was outraged and part of the U.S. response was that such practice is common on both sides around the world. □

## School apologizes for black history menu

**CONCORD, California (AP)** — Officials at a Northern California private school are apologizing after a lunch menu option to celebrate Black History Month angered some parents and students with stereotypically ethnic foods. Students at Carondelet High School for Girls in

Concord wanted to come up with ways to observe the occasion during a lunchtime celebration Friday. But when the school announced a menu of fried chicken, cornbread and watermelon, other students and parents became offended.

KNTV-TV reports that school officials held an

assembly Wednesday to discuss the issue and also sent a letter apologizing to parents. Principal Nancy Libby wrote that the items were taken off of the menu and that the school doesn't perpetrate racial stereotypes.

Libby also wrote the school will hold a diversity assembly. □

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## Kellogg cereals struggle to keep spot at the table

**CANDICE CHOI**  
**MICHELLE CHAPMAN**  
**Associated Press**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Kellogg's cereals keep getting pushed aside at the breakfast table. The maker of Frosted Flakes, Pop Tarts and Eggo waffles said Thursday that sales in its flagship U.S. breakfast unit declined 4 percent. The drop comes as amid an ongoing sluggishness in the cereal market, reflecting the challenges the company and rival General Mills face in convincing Americans to spoon up more cereal amid heightened competition. In a call with analysts, Kellogg CEO John Bryant called the move away from cereal an "unconscious migration" toward options such as eggs, toast, peanut butter and yogurt. As such, Bryant expressed confidence that cereal sales could get moving in the right direction again with the help of sharper marketing. He stressed that breakfast sales overall are growing and that cereal remains the No. 1 option in the category. "We need to tell our story more effectively," he said. To do just that, the company plans to unveil a major ad campaign in the second quarter. In a phone interview, Bryant said the campaign would tout the benefits of cereal overall, rather than focus on any one brand, such as Raisin Bran or Apple Jacks. □

## Industry pushing voluntary labels on GMOs

**MARY CLARE JALONICK**  
**Associated Press**  
**WASHINGTON (AP)** —

America's large food companies are trying to head off efforts to enact mandatory labeling of genetically modified ingredients by proposing new voluntary labels nationwide. The food industry and farm groups are pushing Congress to pass legislation that would require the Food and Drug Administration to create guidelines for the new labels, which food manufacturers could use. A federal standard for voluntary labels would get food manufacturers off the hook if any U.S. states pass laws requiring mandatory labeling. Recent ballot initiatives in California and Washington failed, but several state legislatures are considering labeling requirements and opponents of engineered ingredients are aggressively pushing new laws in several states. There's very little science that says genetically engineered foods are unsafe. But opponents say there's too much unknown about the seeds that are altered in labs to have certain traits, and that consumers have a right to know if they are eating them. The seeds are engineered for a variety of reasons, many of them to resist herbicides or insects. One of the biggest stumbling blocks to securing a massive free trade agreement between the United States and Europe is a

sharp disagreement on genetically modified foods. The European Union has some of the strictest regulations in the world for genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, requiring extensive testing, labeling and monitoring of all food products whose DNA has been

ers announced a partnership with 28 farm and food industry groups Thursday to push for the legislation. The groups include the National Corn Growers Association, the National Restaurant Association and the National Beverage Association, all industries that have seen

introduce and pass a bill that would require FDA to do a safety review of new genetically engineered ingredients before they are sold in food. So far, FDA has not found safety issues with modified ingredients. The companies are facing pressure from retailers



**Produce on a Whole Foods paper bag in Andover, Mass. Large food companies are trying to head off state-by-state efforts to enact mandatory labeling of genetically modified ingredients by proposing new voluntary labels nationwide.**

(AP Photo/Elise Amendola)

manipulated in labs. Pamela Bailey, president and CEO of the Grocery Manufacturers Association, the U.S. food industry's main trade group, said the decision on labels should rest with the Food and Drug Administration, which is set up to assess the safety of foods. The grocery manufactur-

pushback from consumers over modified ingredients. The groups say mandatory labels would cause confusion, misleading consumers into thinking that the ingredients are unsafe. The labels could also be inconsistent from state to state, the groups said. The industries are lobbying members of Congress to

as the conversation about modified ingredients has grown louder. Whole Foods announced last year that it plans to label GMO products in all its U.S. and Canadian stores within five years. And some companies have decided to just remove the ingredients altogether, so no labels will be necessary. □





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## US productivity growth weak for fourth quarter

**M. CRUTSINGER**

**AP Economics Writer**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — U.S. productivity growth slowed in the fourth quarter while labor costs kept falling. For the year, productivity turned in another weak gain.

Productivity grew at an annual rate of 3.2 percent in the October-December period, down slightly from a 3.6 percent growth rate in the third quarter, the Labor Department reported Thursday. Labor costs fell at a 1.6 percent rate in the fourth quarter after an even bigger 2 percent rate of decline in the third quarter.

For the year, productivity rose a slight 0.6 percent, down from a 1.5 percent increase in 2012, and the weakest performance since an 0.5 percent rise in 2011. Labor costs edged up a slight 1 percent in 2013, continuing a trend of modest gains in labor costs.

Productivity measures output per hour of work. Greater productivity raises living standards because it enables companies to pay their workers more without having to raise prices which could boost inflation.

The Federal Reserve monitors productivity and labor costs for any signs that inflation could pick up. Mild inflation has allowed the Fed to keep short-term interest rates at record lows and purchase bonds to try to keep long-term rates down.

The Fed in December and again in January announced that it was reducing its monthly bond purchases, taking them from \$85 billion per month down to \$65 billion. □

## US Financial Front:

# Applications for US jobless aid fall 20K to 331K

**JOSH BOAK**

**AP Economics Writer**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The number of people applying for U.S. unemployment benefits declined 20,000 last week to 331,000, suggesting that Americans are facing fewer layoffs and better job prospects.

The Labor Department said the four-week average, a less volatile measure, ticked up 250 to 334,000. That remains near pre-recession levels and serves as evidence that job losses have waned.

A total of 3.47 million Americans received benefits as of Jan. 18, down from 3.58 million the week before. Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, described the decline in benefit claims as "something of a relief."

Cold weather in January caused work stoppages, leading the number of unemployment benefits

applications to swing from week to week. The Labor Department said it had to estimate, for example, the number of applications from Kansas after an ice storm prevented that state from providing data.

"The latest bout of severe weather could easily push

claims back up again for a time," Shepherdson cautioned.

The January employment report being released Friday by the Labor Department will show whether hiring has improved. A scant 74,000 jobs were added in December, the fewest in

three years. Most economists forecast that hiring will rebound in January to roughly match the monthly average of 185,000 jobs gained over the past two years.

The unemployment rate fell in December to 6.7 percent from 7 percent. □



Job seekers sign in before meeting prospective employers during a career fair at a hotel in Dallas. The Labor Department reported on the number of people who applied for unemployment benefits for the first week of February on Thursday, Feb. 6, 2014.

(AP Photo/LM Otero)

## Wider trade gap may mean slower Q4 growth

**MARTIN CRUTSINGER**

**AP Economics Writer**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The U.S. trade deficit widened in December after hitting a four-year low in November. But for 2013, the gap reached its lowest point since 2009 as exports rose to a record. Analysts said the larger-than-expected trade deficit for December would likely reduce estimates of growth in the October-December quarter. The government had initially estimated fourth-quarter growth at a 3.2 percent annual rate. But economists at Barclays say the bigger December gap could reduce that estimate to a 2.8

percent rate.

The trade deficit rose to \$38.7 billion in December, a 12 percent increase over November, the Commerce Department said Thursday. Exports slipped 1.8 percent to \$191.3 billion. Imports rose 0.3 percent to \$230 billion. For all of 2013, the deficit dropped 11.8 percent to \$471.5 billion. That was the lowest level since the Great Recession caused the deficit to shrink in 2009. U.S. exports rose 2.8 percent as an improving global economy benefited American manufacturers. An energy production boom also lifted U.S. petroleum exports to a record. Imports

dipped 0.1 percent.

A smaller trade deficit can boost economic growth. U.S. manufacturers gain from rising export sales while U.S. consumers are buying fewer foreign-made products. A domestic energy boom has boosted exports and reduced America's dependence on foreign oil. U.S. petroleum exports were up 10.9 percent in 2013 to an all-time high of \$137 billion. Imports were down 11 percent to \$369.3 billion. The drop in imports was helped by falling global oil prices. By country, the United States ran another record trade deficit with China: \$318.4

billion for the year, an increase of 1 percent from 2012. The United States has recorded its largest trade deficit with China each year since 2000, when that country supplanted Japan as the nation with the largest trade imbalance with the United States.

That is likely to add to pressure on Congress and the Obama administration to crack down on what critics see as China's unfair trade practices. U.S. manufacturers contend that China is keeping its currency undervalued against the dollar by as much as 40 percent in order to gain trade advantages. □



# Toronto Mayor Rob Ford launching YouTube show

**ROB GILLIES**

**Associated Press**

**TORONTO (AP)** — Toronto Mayor Rob Ford, whose admitted crack cocaine use and bizarre antics made him a favorite of late-night co-

10. The mayor of Canada's largest city asks people to "please judge me on my record, not my personal life" in a preview posted Thursday. Ford last year made international headlines when he

and is seeking re-election. A news release from the mayor's office promises "unfiltered" talk and asks viewers to submit questions to an email address. Last November the tabloid

Nation" radio show was also canceled. The promotion clip for the new "Ford Nation" show starts off with Rob asking his brother about his favorite food. "What do you eat? You've got a big belly on you. You must be eating something. What's your favorite food?" Rob asks Doug. The show's announcement comes after the Ford brothers made controversial comments about the city's prominent gay pride festival. The mayor of Canada's largest city said he would never attend the city's annual gay pride parade. "I'm not going to go to the pride parade. I've never been to a pride parade. So I'm not going to change the way I am," Rob Ford said. Ford made the remarks on

Wednesday night during a candidates' forum for the mayoral election set for Oct. 27. The mayor has been criticized for not attending the June parade. He has previously said he skipped the event because he faithfully attends a family cottage on the weekend of Canada's birthday. Doug Ford defended his brother, saying he isn't homophobic. Doug said he's been to the Pride parade but won't bring his kids again because he doesn't "condone middle aged men running down the middle of the street buck naked." The mayor's spokesman said Thursday that Rob Ford was not feeling well and wouldn't be at work after reporters questioned where he was. □



Toronto Mayor Rob Ford is questioned by reporters in Toronto. Ford and his brother, a city councilor, are launching a YouTube series called "Ford Nation" that will debut Feb. 10.

(AP Photo/Chris Young)

medians, now has a video channel of his own. Ford and his brother, a city councilor, are launching a YouTube series called "Ford Nation" that will debut Feb.

admitted to having smoked crack cocaine while in a drunken stupor. He continues to draw attention for erratic behavior, but he has resisted pressure to step down

Sun News Network cancelled a "Ford Nation" television show after only one episode after complaining it took five hours to shoot and over 10 hours to edit. A "Ford

## Members of Russian Punk Band Get Warm Greeting in Brooklyn

**MELENA RYZIK**

**© 2014 New York Times**

**NEW YORK** - "I'd like to thank Pussy Riot," Madonna said, "for making the word 'pussy' a sacred word in my household." She was speaking from the stage of the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, introducing two members of that Russian activist group, who had recently emerged from prison not just outspoken women and critics of President Vladimir Putin of Russia, but global symbols of rebellion. On Wednesday night, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina were two of the main attractions at a benefit concert for Amnesty International, where the musical stars included Blondie, Tegan and Sara, Imagine Dragons and the Flaming Lips, and the message was one of supporting human rights.

Madonna did not perform, but, in head-to-toe black, read from a long statement to welcome Tolokonnikova and Alyokhina, known to their fans as Nadya and Masha. "It's not a coincidence that I was on tour and that I happened to be in Moscow the day that Pussy Riot went on trial," Madonna said, because she had been horrified to hear of their 2012 arrest, on charges of hooliganism, for performing an anti-Putin song in a Moscow cathedral. She added that she had been threatened with arrest herself, for performances in Russia that were said to promote "gay behavior." "Needless to say, I did not change one moment of my show," she said, but 87 members of her audience were arrested over displays of gay pride. □



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## Sochi:

## Banned carry-on items slipping through Russian security



An anti-aircraft missile base sits outside the cross-country skiing venue prior to the 2014 Winter Olympics, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2014, in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia.

(AP Photo)

**KARL RITTER**  
Associated Press

**SOCHI, Russia (AP)** — Despite a temporary Russian ban on liquids in carry-on luggage, some air travelers heading to the Sochi Olympics through Moscow have brought toothpaste and other toiletries past security checkpoints without any problems.

Security concerns ahead of the Sochi Games were renewed after the U.S. Homeland Security Department warned airlines flying to Russia that terrorists may try to smuggle explosives into the country in toothpaste tubes.

Yet six Associated Press employees arriving in Moscow from across the world or beginning their journey there passed through security without having to remove toothpaste, hand lotion or water bottles from their carry-on luggage.

Another AP journalist, arriving in Moscow from Singapore, said a security official checked his deodorant and then returned it, but didn't notice or make mention of a very small tube of

toothpaste.

Other air travelers heading to Sochi also said their experience of Russian airport security was surprisingly hassle-free.

"It was pretty chill. I had an empty 1-1/2 liter water bottle because I was hoping to fill it up on the plane but no one checked it," said Matt Segal, an Australian tourist who traveled from Moscow to Sochi on Thursday. "No one has pulled it out and asked about it."

The no-liquids rule applies to anyone departing from a Russian airport, including transit passengers, said Russian Transport Ministry spokeswoman Nataliya Nesterova. She said it was up to airports to make sure it is enforced.

The seemingly sporadic enforcement underscores the difficulty that governments face in ensuring that airport personnel in many places, screening thousands of impatient people in a compressed period of time, maintain consistent practices as they try to prevent attacks that could be both human and public-

relations disasters.

And even if practices are consistent inside a single country, the many points of transit that travelers pass through en route to Sochi fall under the jurisdiction of multiple governments.

An AP journalist starting a three-leg trip to Sochi in Detroit on Thursday had to leave his toothpaste and deodorant behind after an airline official told him he couldn't bring those items to Russia in his carry-on luggage.

Moscow airport officials didn't immediately return calls Thursday seeking comment about enforcement of the ban, which runs from January to April, well after the Olympics and Paralympics end. Russian deputy prime minister Dmitry Kozak had no comment Thursday on the toothpaste warning from the U.S. Homeland Security Department in the U.S.

"I don't have any reaction at this point. We're checking this information," Kozak told reporters Thursday at a news conference in Olympic Park.

He said Russia can guarantee the safety of people attending the Sochi Games as efficiently as any other government hosting a major event.

"I believe that warnings about Sochi, about Russia

were superfluous, and the threat levels in Sochi are just like they are in Boston or London," he said. "I would like to reiterate that security in Sochi will be no worse than in New York, London, Washington or Boston." □

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# Top US diplomat Nuland arrives in Kiev for talks

**YURAS KARMANAU**

**Associated Press**

**KIEV, Ukraine (AP)** — Ukrainian protesters lambasted

Victoria Nuland met separately with President Viktor Yanukovich and with opposition leaders during her

tion of the conflict." There were no immediate details about her meeting with the opposition figures.

During it, a voice resembling Nuland's expresses profane impatience with the European Union over international efforts to resolve Ukraine's political crisis. U.S. officials said they suspect Russia is behind the leak of the apparently bugged phone conversation.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday condemned alleged outside interference in Ukraine's affairs, according to his spokesman, Dmitry Peskov. Nuland's visit comes amid growing frustration over parliament's failure to enact constitutional reforms and an amnesty for protesters. The legislature met three days this week, but produced no results and adjourned Thursday until next week.

In Kiev on Thursday, about 2,000 demonstrators marched toward parliament carrying a banner reading: "We are tired of waiting." Protesters said they were ready to resume clashes with police, if parliament's inaction continued. They want Yanukovich to resign and a

new election to be held, as well as more human rights and less corruption in their nation of 45 million people. The U.S. and the European Union have called for Yanukovich and the opposition to reach a compromise and warned Yanukovich against using more force against the protesters. The massive demonstrations began in late November after the president spurned the EU in favor of getting a \$15 billion loan from Russia to shore up his debt-ridden nation.

The European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, adopted a non-binding resolution Thursday urging the bloc's 28 nations to prepare targeted sanctions such as freezing assets of "Ukrainian officials, legislators and oligarchs personally responsible for the attacks on and deaths of protesters."

Three protesters were killed in clashes with police and another one was abducted and then found frozen to death.

On Thursday, a commander of the protesters' self-appointed security corps.



A press photographer takes photos of an opposition supporter as they march toward the parliament in Kiev, Ukraine, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2014. The threat of new protest violence in Ukraine is tapering off but the country's two-month-old political and economic crisis remains far from being resolved, the European Union's foreign policy chief said Wednesday. EU envoy Catherine Ashton spoke after meeting with President Viktor Yanukovich, who has been the focus of months of massive protests demanding his resignation.

(AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti)

parliament on Thursday for its lack of action, and a senior U.S. diplomat arrived in Kiev to try to help find a resolution to the country's grinding political crisis. Assistant Secretary of State

two-day stay in the Ukrainian capital.

A statement on Yanukovich's website said the president "emphasized that he would do everything to prevent escalation

Two days before Nuland arrived in Kiev on Thursday, a video was posted on YouTube containing audio of an alleged phone call between her and U.S. Ambassador Geoffrey Pyatt.

## 3 tons of illegal ivory crushed in Paris

**LORI HINNANT**

**Associated Press**

**PARIS (AP)** — More than 3 tons of illegal ivory seized by French customs agents was pulverized into dust on Thursday in Europe's first destruction of a stockpile of the banned elephant tusks. The destruction of the ivory, confiscated over two decades, was designed to send a message to poachers and traffickers that preservationists hope will help stem the illicit trade that endangers the species' survival. Other countries doing the same recently include the United States, Gabon and China, ivory's biggest market.

"Customs seizures can vary from one year to the other — there is a lot of evolution in it — but one thing doesn't change, that's the consumer appetite for ivory," said Sebastien Tiran, a customs agent at Paris'

Roissy Charles de Gaulle airport, where the bulk of the ivory was confiscated. In 2012, an estimated 22,000 African elephants were poached for their tusks, according to a study prepared by CITES, TRAFFIC International and the SSC African Elephant Specialist Group. The market price of ivory is more than \$1,000 a pound (\$2,200 per kilogram) and has more than doubled in the past five years, said Ginette Hemley, vice president of species conservation at the World Wildlife Fund.

Hemley supports the destruction of stockpiles, saying they send a powerful signal that governments will not tolerate or profit from illegal ivory.

But she acknowledged that simply destroying seized stocks will not be enough to tamp down demand, which she said has grown

exponentially since 2009.

"It's not all going to happen overnight," she said. But Hemley said when poached ivory was first banned in 1989, it took two or three years before prices dropped dramatically, as did the number of elephants killed for their tusks. Prices rose again beginning a decade later, driven by demand in China, and the profits began attracting attention from criminal syndicates.

Critics of the stockpile destructions say they can backfire by decreasing supply and raising prices.

"These burnings of stockpiles are actually attracting more criminals into it," said Dan Stiles, a researcher in Kenya who studies the ivory trade and is a member of the African Elephant Specialist Group. "These people are speculators. They're banking on extinction." □



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## Syria opposition free hundreds in attack on prison

**ZEINA KARAM**  
**Associated Press**

**BEIRUT (AP)** — A suicide bomber blew himself up at the gates of a Syrian prison Thursday and rebels stormed in behind him, freeing hundreds of inmates as part of an offensive aimed at capturing key government symbols around the northern city of Aleppo.

Government forces, meanwhile, dropped crude "barrel bombs" in deadly airstrikes as both sides escalated their fight for the strategic city ahead of a second round of peace talks set for next week. Opposition leaders threatened to suspend the talks over the barrel bombings. In the past six days alone, the makeshift weapons — containers packed with explosives, fuel and scrap metal — have killed more than 250 people in Aleppo, including 73 children, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

They include at least 11 who died Thursday — six of them from the same family — in the opposition-held neighborhood of Masaken Hanano.

Videos uploaded by activists showed the aftermath, including men weeping amid ravaged buildings and corpses covered with blankets on the pavement. "Be careful. There's a corpse under your feet. .. It's a child!" someone shouted. □

## Israel:

# Ultra-Orthodox Jews protest pending draft

**ARON HELLER**  
**Associated Press**

**JERUSALEM (AP)** — Thousands of ultra-Orthodox Jews blocked highways across Israel Thursday to protest attempts to draft them into the army, clashing with club-wielding police who aimed water cannons and fired stun grenades at large crowds of black-garbed men.

The violent protests came just days after a Supreme Court ruling ordered funding halted to ultra-Orthodox seminaries whose students dodge the draft and laid bare one of the deepest rifts in Israeli society, highlighting the fundamental disagreements between its secular majority and a devout minority over the character of the Jewish state.

Ultra-Orthodox Jews have for years been exempt from military service, which is compulsory for other Jewish Israelis. The arrangement has caused widespread resentment and featured prominently in last year's election, after which the ultra-Orthodox parties lost ground and found themselves outside the governing coalition.

The new government immediately began pushing a bill that will alter the existing system to gradually reduce the number of exemptions and require all to register for service. While it awaits parliamentary approval, this week's court ruling — followed by Finance Minister Yair Lapid's freezing of the funds — marked

the first concrete sanction against draft dodgers and sparked angry reactions from ultra-Orthodox leaders who claim the military will expose their youth to secularism and undermine their devout lifestyle. The opposition spilled into the streets Thursday in the form of about a half-dozen

highway in central Israel. Police on horses beat back demonstrators with clubs and used stun grenades to clear the roads. Two policemen were wounded and 35 protesters were arrested, Rosenfeld said. The issue of army service is at the core of a cultural war over the place of ultra-

their young men serve the nation through prayer and study, thus preserving Jewish learning and heritage, and maintaining a pious way of life that has kept the Jewish people alive through centuries of persecution.

Leaders of the community, which in Hebrew is known



**Israeli police officers on horses disperse a crowd of ultra-Orthodox Jewish men during a demonstration in Jerusalem, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2014. Israeli police said thousands of ultra-Orthodox Jews are blocking highways across the country to protest plans to enlist them into the military.**

(AP Photo/Sebastian Scheiner)

simultaneous demonstrations that snarled traffic for several hours.

Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said some 400 activists tried to block the entrance to Jerusalem, while demonstrators hurled stones at police and set a patrol car on fire in the southern city of Ashdod. Elsewhere, about 2,000 protesters blocked a major

Orthodox Jews in Israeli society. The ultra-Orthodox, who make up about 8 percent of Israel's 8 million citizens, largely have been allowed to skip compulsory military service to pursue their religious studies. Older men often avoid the workforce and collect welfare stipends while continuing to study full time.

The ultra-Orthodox insist

as "Haredim," or those who fear God, say their followers would rather sit in jail than join the military. Yair Sheleg, an expert on the Israeli religious sector at the nonpartisan Israel Democracy Institute, said Thursday's outburst reflected a genuine rage over the proposed plan but also a show of strength to try to limit its impact. □



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## Eurozone rates unchanged despite deflation fear

**DAVID McHUGH**  
AP Business Writer

**FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)**

— The European Central Bank is sizing up the problems facing the 18-country eurozone before it decides whether to cut interest rates to support the anemic recovery, its president said Thursday.

Weak growth and an unexpected drop in inflation have raised concerns that the eurozone might slide into deflation, a sustained drop in prices that can cripple the economy. The eurozone is among the world's biggest economic blocs, and a slide into deflation would crimp global growth.

But the ECB's governing council left its interest rate benchmark unchanged at a record low of 0.25 percent at its meeting Thursday. Some analysts had thought it might cut the rate to 0.1 percent.

In his news conference, Mario Draghi signaled the ECB was in a wait-and-see mode. He repeated the bank's promise to keep rates low "for an extended period" until the economy picks up more speed. And he said that if the economic data worsened, the bank would be ready to act to support a recovery he described as "fragile." Draghi said the picture of the economy was "complex" and that the ECB was trying to discern whether some poor indicators in recent days are signs of longer-term trouble.

It is not clear, for example, whether a slowdown in growth in emerging markets, where financial mar-

kets have been highly volatile in recent weeks, will be enough to cause serious damage to trade partners like the eurozone. Also, the recent drop in inflation — to 0.7 percent, far short of the ECB's target

working on different stimulus steps "so when the time comes to activate we are ready to go."

Draghi said he didn't expect deflation to take hold in Europe because there was no downward price

over half a cent to \$1.3604 by late afternoon Europe time. Higher rates can send a currency up because they offer relatively higher yields for investors.

The benchmark refinancing rate is what the ECB



**President of European Central Bank Mario Draghi speaks during a press conference following the meeting of the governing council in Frankfurt, Germany, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2014. The European Central Bank has left its benchmark interest rate unchanged, holding off on more stimulus despite weak economic growth and low inflation.**

of just below 2 percent — may eventually pick up. The ECB has "to look through this volatility and see whether it is a temporary phenomenon," he said. The bank, he said, remained "willing and ready to act" with any of its available measures if it sees inflation falling further, or if credit conditions tighten. A small spike in overnight borrowing costs last month raised concerns among economists, but proved to be transitory.

Officials at the ECB are

spiral feeding on itself.

Analyst Christian Schulz at Berenberg Bank said that despite Draghi's extensive explanation of why the bank didn't act, "the door to further steps remains wide open, as headline inflation stays weak." Schulz said that next month's meeting "could be crucial" because the bank will have new inflation forecasts that could provide a basis for action.

The euro rose sharply on the ECB's decision to keep rates on hold, jumping

**(AP Photo/Michael Probst)**

charges banks for loans, and through them influences the cost of credit for everybody else. Cutting the rate in theory makes it easier for people to buy new homes and for businesses to borrow and expand production. However the ECB has cut almost as far as it can.

Other actions on top of that could include offering cheap loans to banks as a way to encourage lending and push down the cost of short-term credit in the market. □

## Bear bile farms nearing collapse in South Korea

**HYUNG-JIN KIM**  
Associated Press

**DANGJIN, South Korea (AP)**

— Several bears lie on top of each other, as still as teddy bears, as they gaze out past rusty iron bars. Others pace restlessly. The ground below their metal cages is littered with feces, Krispy Kreme doughnuts, dog food and fruit. They've been kept in these dirty pens since birth, bred for a single purpose: to be killed for their bile.

But these bears aren't dying. The industry is.

Though their bile has been used as medicine in Asia for thousands of years, cheaper foreign sources, growing skepticism over bear bile's medicinal value and worries about international condemnation have led to a huge drop in South Korean demand. Kim KwangSoo, the owner of this farm in Dangjin, about 120 kilometers (about 75 miles) south of Seoul, said he hasn't had a bear bile customer in five years.

That, however, doesn't ensure the animals a peaceful future. The government is offering farmers money and incentives to sterilize or slaughter their bears, but the farmers are demanding much more. Kim, secretary general of a bear farmers' association, said farmers are considering suing or even more drastic measures — such as harming their bears — if they can't reach a deal. He said farmers raised the issue of greater government compensation Thursday during a meeting with government officials and civilian experts, and that they will meet again this month. □





## Chinese New Year at the Trop Club & Casino:

# Golden Envelope Giveaway marks 2014: The Year of the Horse!

**EAGLE BEACH** - Celebrating the Year of the Horse just recently, the Trop Club & Casino held a two day celebration from noon to midnight commemorating the Chinese Zodiac, and the Year of the Horse, which according to tradition relates closely to self improvement and social activities. Wilfred Trimon, Director of Casino, Tropicana Aruba Resort & Casino,



banter that free money and prizes are two of the best ways to combine self improvement with social activities in the casino environment, thus the casino gave away an opportune amount of cash and prizes, a total of \$1,888, including iPads and a weekend stay. Members of the Trop Advantage Club were asked to earn just 168 points in order to qualify for a Golden Envelope. In Chinese Buddhism and Feng Shui 168 means the start of something good, obtainable with little to no obstacles. The opportune number also



delivers luck, happiness, wealth and good health, and it helped just one Trop Advantage Club member become the lucky winner, for a chance to pick one of three Red Envelopes worth up to \$888.

The Chinese themed casino party drew an engaged and engaging crowd and was deemed one of the Trop Club & Casino most successful promotions.

Finally, active members of the Trop Advantage Club, who enjoyed the game of Plinko on Friday and Saturday evenings during the month of January, are getting an additional opportunity to win more than AWG 5,000 in cash and Trop Play, every weekend in February, as the promotion was extended for an additional month.



The Trop Club and Casino, has been staging spectacular promotions and over the year entertained slot and table players with Rolling for Riches, It's Raining iPads and Slot Star Championships just to name a few, with Chinese New Year and Plinko, just joining the list of stellar promotions.





# Acqua Condominium Aruba: The Essence of a Lifestyle

**PALM BEACH** – Acqua Condominium Aruba, a project spearheaded by Acqua Construction, on 325,278 sq. ft. of prime property land on Palm Beach announced recently that construction has been progressing at a satisfactory pace and that





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the sales gallery as well as the model-suite within the Sabbia Tower, are ready to welcome tours and inquiries, seven days a week. The developer has also recently incentivized your purchase with the following super deals! Right now, with a deposit of 30%, you will receive 10% discount, and with a deposit of 50% your discount becomes 15%! Additionally enticing, by paying in full you will receive 25% discount!

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The Sabbia Tower, overlooking Palm Beach boasts 208, 2-bedroom condos, with 2 baths each, spread over 14 floors. The two top building floors embrace 16 penthouse apartments with majestic views.

The two condo towers, on the already fully-fenced property, will be complemented by a two-story shopping complex, facing the Palm Beach Plaza Mall, with commercial space for trendy restaurants and up-scale shops.

Making the decision on a purchase, and acting on

it fast, was recently made even more imperative, in view of the fact that the island government of Aruba reiterated its commitment to a building moratorium for the next 10 years, making Acqua Condominium a truly unique investment opportunity, as it is the one and only high-rise condo project, on property land, in the island's most-desired location.

If the image of Aqua Condominium tugs at your heartstrings, you are invited to visit the sales gallery and the elegant model-suites available for viewing, fully finished with luxurious touches and high-end amenities.

The sales center is open Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 5:30pm; Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 2pm: A gorgeous model unit is available for you to preview!

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You will find the website very helpful with all legal documents, floor plans, furnishings and finishings, posted on line: [www.acquaruba.com](http://www.acquaruba.com). □

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# Over 500 NFL fans cheer Super Bowl at MooMba Beach!



**MOOMBA BEACH** - Watching the Super Bowl at MooMba Beach was a vacation highlight for fans of both the Denver Broncos and the Seattle Seahawks. Whatever one may think about the end result of the Super Bowl, which was held this past Sunday evening in New York, the atmosphere at MooMba Beach, where more than 500 fans were cheering on their favorite teams, was sizzling. Two giant screens on the beach, one in the restaurant and 4 more above the bar showed every little detail of the game as well as the terrific ads and the half-time super performance of Bruno Mars and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. Guests



shouted and screamed, applauded and groaned as the game proceeded, while nibbling on chicken wings, pizza slices and nachos. The beer bucket specials went like hot cakes as well. The party at MooMba

Beach continued after the game under the spirited guidance of DJ Diablo, the house DJ of choice at this fantastic, tropical location. MooMba Beach was mentioned last week on the Fox News internet site as number two of the 'Best exotic escapes for Super Bowl Sunday', a listing of great places with nice, hot climates. The place made this honorary listing more than true - the evening was fantastic! □



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**James has 31, Heat survive Griffin's 43**

Los Angeles Clippers forward Blake Griffin, right, goes up for a dunk as Miami Heat forward Chris Andersen, center, defends and forward LeBron James, second from left, and forward Matt Barnes watch during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2014, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press  
See NBA Capsules on Page 22



Tiger Woods of the U.S. hits a bunker shot during the second round of the Dubai Desert Classic golf tournament in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Friday Jan. 31, 2014.

Associated Press

## Woods to skip Match Play Championship in Arizona

**JUPITER, Florida (AP)** — Tiger Woods is skipping the Match Play Championship in Arizona in two weeks.

Woods announced on his website on Thursday that he wasn't planning to compete in the first World Golf Championship. He says his plan was to attend the Sochi Olympics in Russia before his girlfriend and champion skier Lindsey Vonn got injured. Instead, he will stay home and prepare for

three tournaments in Florida. He'll next play the Honda Classic on Feb. 27 followed by title defenses at Doral and Bay Hill.

This is the first time Woods will miss the Match Play Championship when healthy and the tournament is held in America. This means the Match Play will be without three of the top players in the world — Woods, Phil Mickelson and Adam Scott. □



# Hall of Fame slugger Ralph Kiner dies at 91

**RANCHO MIRAGE, Calif. (AP)** -- Ralph Kiner, who slugged his way into the baseball Hall of Fame and enjoyed a half-century career as a popular broadcaster, died Thursday. He was 91.

The Hall said Kiner died at his home in Rancho Mirage with his family at his side.

Kiner hit 369 home runs during his 10-year career, mostly with the Pittsburgh Pirates. He made his debut in 1946 and his power quickly became the talk of baseball - he won or tied for the National League lead in homers in each of his first seven seasons.

"Kiner's Korner" was already a fixture on the New York Mets' airways when he was inducted into the Hall in 1975. He was elected with just one vote to spare in his 15th and final year on the Baseball Writers' Association of America ballot.

The six-time All-Star still ranks sixth all-time with a home run every 14.1 at-bats. He averaged more than 100 RBIs per season and hit .279 with the Pirates, the Chicago Cubs and Cleveland.

When he retired early because of back problems, Kiner was sixth on the career home run list. Several years later, he joined the broadcast crew of the Mets for their expansion season in 1962 and earned a permanent place - the home TV booth at Shea Stadium was named in his honor.

"Kiner's Korner" was a delight for players and fans alike, where stars would join Kiner for postgame chats.

Kiner was known for his malaprops and took them in stride, often laughing about his own comments. He once famously said: "If Casey Stengel were alive today, he'd be spinning in his grave."

Kiner had a stroke about a decade ago that slowed his speech, but remained an occasional part of the Mets' announcing crew. He worked a handful of games last season at Citi Field, his 52th year of calling their games. Fellow announcers such as Keith Hernandez and Ron Darling always brightened when Kiner was alongside them. Younger fans who were born long after Kiner retired also reveled in his folksy tales.

"As one of baseball's most prolific power hitters for a decade, Ralph struck fear into the hearts of the best pitchers of baseball's Golden Era despite his easygoing nature, disarming humility and movie-star smile," Hall President Jeff Idelson said in a statement.

"His engaging personality and profound knowledge of the game turned him into a living room companion for millions of New York Mets fans who adored his game broadcasts and later 'Kiner's Korner' for more than half a century," he said. "He was as comfortable hanging out in Palm Springs with his friend Bob Hope as he was hitting in front of Hank Greenberg at Forbes Field."

As a teen, hanging around the Hollywood Stars in the Pacific Coast League, Kiner shook hands with Babe

Ruth and talked ball with Ty Cobb. In high school, he hit a home run off Satchel Paige during a barnstorming tour.

When he got older, Kiner got to play with real Hollywood stars. His pals included Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra and he once squired Liz Taylor.

As a rookie, Kiner won the NL homer title with 23, beating Johnny Mize by one. He really broke loose the next year, hitting 51 home runs with 127 RBIs while batting .313. Stuck on poor teams, Kiner never made it to the postseason. He made his mark in All-Star games, homering in three straight.

Kiner connected in the 1950 showcase at Comiskey



In this April 5, 2012 file photo, Hall of Famer Ralph Kiner waves to the crowd before announcing the New York Mets starting line-up before an opening day baseball game against the Atlanta Braves at Citi Field in New York. Associated Press

Park, but made more noise with another ball he hit in the game. He hit a long drive to the base of the scoreboard in left-center field and Ted Williams broke his left elbow making the catch, causing him to miss two months.

"Williams always said I ruined his batting stroke, that he could never hit after that," Kiner said. "Yeah, sure. He only hit .388 in '57." Ralph McPherran Kiner was born on Oct. 27, 1922. He married tennis star Nancy Chaffee in 1951. □

## Tanaka gets visa, set to depart for U.S. on time

**TOKYO (AP)** — Japanese pitcher Masahiro Tanaka has obtained a work visa and could depart for the United States as early as Sunday.

Tanaka, who signed a \$155 million, seven-year contract with the New York Yankees last month, obtained his visa on Tuesday and is preparing to leave for spring training which

starts of Feb. 15, a member of Tanaka's support staff said on Thursday.

Tanaka, who has been working out in Sendai, said "I am in better shape at this point compared to previous years." The 25-year-old right-hander replaces the retired Andy Pettitte in the rotation and joins C.C. Sabathia, Hiroki Kuroda and Ivan Nova. □

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# Pacquiao out to show Bradley his killer instinct

**RALPH D. RUSSO**

**AP Sports Writer**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Manny Pacquiao is out to show Timothy Bradley that he still has a "killer instinct."

Pacquiao was in New York on Wednesday as part of a media tour to promote his rematch with Bradley on April 12 in Las Vegas. Bradley beat Pacquiao in 2012 in a hotly disputed split decision.

At a news conference on Tuesday in southern California, Bradley said the 35-year-old Pacquiao still has skills, but the former welterweight champion's "killer instinct is gone."

In an interview with The Associated Press, Pacquiao said he takes that as a challenge.

"The aggressiveness and killer instinct, I have that, but sometimes I'm too nice with my opponent," Pacquiao said. "But this fight he challenged me to



Boxer Manny Pacquiao, of the Philippines, left, poses for a photo with current WBO World Welterweight champion Timothy Bradley of Indio, Ca., during a press conference, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2014, in New York. The pair will face off in a title fight in Las Vegas, April 12, 2014.

**Associated Press**

do that. But this fight, he'll get it." Pacquiao (55-5-2, 38 KOs) was scheduled to attend the New York Knicks'

game at Madison Square Garden later in the day, and then appear on Keith Olbermann's ESPN show.

Pacquiao, who is a congressman back home in the Philippines, lost to Bradley and was knocked out

by Juan Manuel Marquez six months later in 2012. He didn't fight again for almost a year before beating Brandon Rio in a decisive unanimous decision in November. During that time he ran for re-election — unopposed — and he helped his wife run for office, too.

"I don't lose my passion or my desire to fight," Pacquiao said. "It's part of boxing. Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose." Pacquiao said at 35 years old he has changed his training routine to allow himself more time off, but his workouts are as intense as ever. Still, he said he plans to retire in two or three more years.

"I feel in my body I can still fight, by God's grace," he said. That doesn't leave much time for the match fight fans have longed for: Pacquiao vs. Floyd Mayweather. □



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# Crosby leads Penguins to 5-1 win over Sabres

The Associated Press

**BUFFALO, New York (AP)**

— Sidney Crosby scored a highlight-reel goal and added an assist, leading the Pittsburgh Penguins to a 5-1 victory over the Buffalo Sabres on Wednesday night.

Evgeni Malkin, James Neal, Brian Gibbons and minor-league call-up Harry Zolnierczyk also scored for Eastern Conference-leading Pittsburgh. Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 24 shots and the Penguins (40-15-2) set a franchise record by reaching 40 wins in 57 games. That eclipsed the mark of 40 wins in 65 games in 1995-96.

Drew Stafford scored for the NHL's worst team, and Ryan Miller finished with 29 saves. Buffalo (15-33-8) dropped to 4-9-4 in its past 17 and is winless in its last eight home games (0-5-3). That's the Sabres' worst home stretch since opening the season 0-8-1.

Crosby scored put the Penguins up 2-1 with a breath-taking play 2:08 into the second period. It came immediately after Fleury stopped Buffalo's Brian Flynn in close.

Crosby circled his own net

and built up a head of steam by driving up the left wing. Accepting Matt Niiskanen's pass while crossing center, Crosby didn't break stride in cutting between Flynn and Mike Weber. The Pittsburgh star drove toward the net and snapped a shot just inside the top right corner.

**BLACKHAWKS 2, DUCKS 0**

**ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)**

— Corey Crawford made 29 saves in his first shutout of the season, and Chicago pulled within one point of Anaheim for the overall NHL lead with a victory over the Ducks.

Marian Hossa scored in the second period and captain Jonathan Toews added a late goal for the defending Stanley Cup champion Blackhawks, who improved to 3-0-2 on their six-game trip before the Olympic break.

Jonas Hiller stopped 23 shots for the Ducks, who have lost four of five. Anaheim also has lost four of its last seven home games after starting the season 20-0-2 at Honda Center.

The two teams had 15 combined Olympians on the Honda Center ice, including five key members

of the Canadian team headed to Sochi.

**Pittsburgh Penguins' Jussi Jokinen (36), of Finland, and James Neal (18) celebrate a goal by Evgeni Malkin, center, of Russia, during the second period of an NHL hockey game against the Buffalo Sabres in Buffalo, N.Y., Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2014.**

Associated Press

**SHARKS 2, STARS 1, OT**

**SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP)**

— Tommy Wingels scored with 3:08 remaining in overtime to lead San Jose over Dallas for its second win in six games.

Marty Havlat scored in regulation and set up the game-winner in overtime to give the struggling Sharks a much-needed boost with just one game left before the Olympic break. Alex Stalock made 19 saves.

Valeri Nichushkin tied the game early in the third for the Stars, who came up short in their attempt to sweep a three-game road trip and move into playoff position in the Western Conference. Dallas trails Vancouver by two points in the race for the final playoff spot. Kari Lehtonen made 19 saves. □



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## Kittel wins 2nd stage of inaugural Dubai Tour

**PALM ISLAND ATLANTIS,**

United Arab Emirates (AP) — Marcel Kittel outprinted rival Peter Sagan to win the second stage of the Dubai Tour, and American rider Taylor Phinney took third to pad his overall lead on Thursday.

Kittel, riding for Giant-Shimano, arrived at the Palm Jumeirah artificial archipelago after a 122-kilometer ride from Dubai in a tight bunch, and outkicked Sagan of Cannondale Pro Cycling to win the stage in 2 hours, 50 minutes, 30 seconds.

"The team did a great job in bringing me into position," Kittel said. "It was a tough race. It was windy, and it was sandy. I hope



**German cyclist Marcel Kittel, from team Giant-Shimano, celebrates as he crosses the finish line and wins the Sport Stage of the 2nd day of Dubai Tour in Dubai, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2014.**

Associated Press

it's better in the next few days."

Sagan and Phinney finished with the same time, giving the BMC Racing

rider a one-second time bonus and increasing his overall lead to 15 seconds over teammate Steven Cummings. □



**NBA Capsules**

# Depleted Lakers beat Cavaliers 119-108

**The Associated Press**

**CLEVELAND (AP)** — The depleted Los Angeles Lakers had to keep Robert Sacre on the court after he fouled out in the fourth quarter of their 119-108 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers on Wednesday night.

Rookie Ryan Kelly scored a career-high 26 points, and Steve Blake had his first career triple-double with 11 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds to help Los Angeles snap a seven-game losing streak. The Lakers went 18 for 37 from 3-point range, but Los Angeles' first win in two weeks was overshadowed by a bizarre ending. The Lakers had eight available players coming into the game. Then Nick Young twisted his left knee in the first half and Chris Kaman fouled out early in the fourth quarter. When Jordan Farmar left with an injury in the final period that left Los Angeles with five players.

Sacre committed his sixth foul with 3:32 remaining, but stayed in the



**Cleveland Cavaliers' Anthony Bennett (15) bats a loose ball away from Los Angeles Lakers' Kendall Marshall in the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game on Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2014, in Cleveland. The Lakers won 119-108.**

game because coach Mike D'Antoni was out of healthy bodies. The Lakers were assessed a technical foul.

Farmar scored 21 points, and Wesley Johnson added 20 for the Lakers.

C.J. Miles led Cleveland with 27 points. All-Star point guard Kyrie Irving was taken out with 7:32 remaining in the third quarter and finished with 11 points as the Cavaliers lost their sixth consecutive game.

HEAT 116, CLIPPERS 112  
LOS ANGELES (AP) — LeBron James had 31 points, 12 assists and eight rebounds, Ray Allen hit a clinching 3-pointer in the final minute, and Miami snapped a five-game road losing

streak against Los Angeles. Allen had 15 points off the bench for the two-time defending NBA champions, who began a six-game road trip that will be interrupted four games in by the All-Star break. Dwyane Wade, one of seven Miami players scoring in double figures, had 14 points and eight assists in his 700th regular-season game. The Heat had lost 10 of their previous 12 road games against the Clippers, and hadn't beaten them at Staples Center since Dec. 9, 2007.

Los Angeles got a season-high 43 points and 13 rebounds from Blake Griffin and 31 points from Jamal Crawford.

THUNDER 106, TIMBERWOLVES 97

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Kevin Durant had 26 points, nine rebounds and seven assists and Oklahoma City won for the 12th time in 13 games, beating a Minnesota team without Kevin Love and two other starters. □



**By DOUG FEINBERG**  
**AP Basketball Writer**

Magic Johnson was back at the Staples Center, dishing an assist to the WNBA's Los Angeles Sparks.

The former Lakers great is part of a group buying the Sparks and keeping league MVP Candace Parker and the team in LA.

"The leaders of this great city came together quickly to keep this franchise right where it belongs - in the city of Angels," Johnson said at a news conference Wednesday outside

Staples Center. "Thanks to my sister, Evelyn, playing college basketball, I have a great appreciation of the talented players that represent the WNBA. Our group will now work together to bring our loyal fans another WNBA championship."

Johnson is joined in the ownership group by Mark Walter, the controlling owner of the Los Angeles Dodgers, and co-owners Todd L. Boehly, Robert L. Patton and Stan Kasten. The WNBA and NBA Board

## Magic Johnson buys Sparks, keeps WNBA team in LA

of Governors unanimously approved the purchase of the Sparks by the ownership group.

"We're totally thrilled," WNBA President Laurel Richie told The Associated Press. "When Magic chooses to enter into a partnership with a WNBA team, that's a great thing. He's a legend within basketball. He's very knowledgeable about the game. He's a larger-than-life personality. He's an extremely successful business man. He cares about the community the way that the WNBA does." Johnson and Walter teamed with a group of investors to buy the Dodgers in 2012 for a record \$2 billion and combined with outgoing owner Frank McCourt to buy land surrounding Dodger Stadium for \$150 million.

It will be the same group

owning the Sparks, minus Peter Guber, who owns a stake in the NBA's Golden State Warriors.

Richie said Walter and Johnson discussed the idea on a cross-country flight and by the time they landed on the West Coast they had decided they wanted to own the Sparks. "Earvin came to me and said we need to help save the Sparks and keep them in Los Angeles," Walter said. "The decision was quite easy for our investment group due to the passion Magic has for this city, these great athletes and our phenomenal fans. This team and its great players should remain a part of the sports fabric of this wonderful city."

Previous Sparks owner Paula Madison informed the league in late December that she wouldn't be able

to run the team. She told The Associated Press that her family had lost \$12 million, including \$1.4 million last season, operating the franchise since buying it from the Buss family in 2007. Johnson was a part owner of the Los Angeles Lakers for a decade before selling his share in 2011.

While the franchise hasn't been successful financially, the Sparks have been one of the WNBA's best teams on the court and led the league in attendance the past two seasons. They won WNBA titles in 2001 and 2002 and made it to the playoffs in five of the past six seasons. They were knocked out in the opening round by Phoenix last season. Los Angeles, one of only four original WNBA franchises left, also has one of the league's marquee players in Parker. □



# New app spreads spirit of 2014 Boston Marathon

By PAIGE SUTHERLAND

Associated Press  
BOSTON (AP) -- The Boston Athletic Association has launched an app that allows runners around the world to be a part of the 2014 Boston Marathon experience.

The Boston Marathon World Run app, available for free on Apple and Android phones, is designed to make the exclusive event more inclusive to people of all abilities, locations and ages. Users are encouraged to set fitness goals they hope to accomplish by the April 21st race day, even if they're not in Boston or running a full 26.2 miles. After the 2013 marathon bombing, there was an insatiable outpouring of people wanting to participate in the iconic race, said T.K. Skenderian, marketing and sponsorship manager for the BAA, which organizes the marathon.

"This year we are all Boston Marathoners," Skenderian said. "Whether you can run a 3:30 marathon

or are from Southern Cambodia, everyone can take part." Even if you don't run, sign up and cheer on your friends and family, he said. The app and corresponding website allow runners to share photos, post their mileage and connect with amateur and elite athletes around the globe. People on six continents have already signed up to take part in the virtual running community.

Users can set individual goals, group target mileage or run their own 26.2-mile course on Marathon Monday. By next year, the app is set to have GPS mileage tracking and route mapping, said Al Silvestri, senior vice president of marketing and new media at Lagardere, who helped design the app.

Participants who reach their goals will receive a printable bib number, a finisher's certificate and a Facebook medal that they can show off to friends, Silvestri said.

Kelly Lynch, 31, of Califor-

nia, said she will use the app to stay in touch with friends and family back home even as she does her mileage on the other side of the country.

"We are all affected by what happened last year," said Lynch, who grew up in Winchester, Mass., and graduated from Boston College. "I used to cheer people on during the race while I was at B.C. Now, I can still be a part of it." Lynch said she hopes to run six miles without stopping on April 21.

When people sign up to participate, they can also donate to One Fund Boston, the charity to aid victims of last year's bombings and their families.

Another former Boston resident, 30-year-old Kayla Gorski, said running 26.2 miles sounds daunting to her but she still wants to be involved that day.

"I just registered to run 10 miles on Patriots Day," said Gorski, who now lives in California. "Having this



virtual running community is going to keep me honest and motivated even though I'm miles away."

The 118th edition of the race will have a field of 36,000 runners, a 9,000 increase from last year. □

# Google unveils box for business videoconferences

MICHAEL LIEDTKE

AP Technology Writer  
MOUNTAIN VIEW, California (AP) — Google is introducing a videoconferencing tool designed to make it easier and less expensive to hold face-to-face business meetings even if the participants are scattered in different locations.

The device, called "Chromebox For Meetings," goes on sale for \$999 Thursday in the U.S. and will be available in the coming weeks in Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan, Spain, France, Australia and New Zealand.

The \$999 price includes technology support for the first year. Customers needing support after that will have to pay \$250 annually. Chromebox For Meetings is being sold by Dell Inc., Hewlett-Packard Co. and AsusTek Computer Inc., all of which already sell an assortment of gear to corporate customers and gov-



ernment agencies.

Google Inc. said the box contains everything needed to set up a videoconferencing system that can connect people in up to 15 different locations. The company said someone simply needs to connect the device to a display screen and follow the in-

structions step by step.

The videoconferencing kit relies on several existing Google products: the Chrome operating system based on the eponymous Web browser; the technology running Google's free Hangouts video chat system; and a suite of applications that the company has

been selling to businesses for several years.

Most of Google's previous forays in corporate markets have been aimed at competing with Microsoft Corp.'s Office software and Windows operating system. With the expansion into business videoconferencing, Google is attacking

products made by Cisco Systems Inc. and Polycom Inc.

The introduction of the new Chromebox also underscores Google's commitment to continue stamping its brand on a variety of gadgets, just a week after announcing plans to sell its Motorola Mobility smartphone business to Lenovo Group Ltd. for \$2.9 billion. Google bought Motorola in 2012 with aspirations of building it into an influential player in the growing smartphone maker, but the deal turned into an expensive mistake. □





## GM reports lower-than-expected 4Q earnings

**TOM KRISHER**  
**AP Auto Writer**

**DETROIT (AP)** — General Motors' fourth-quarter net profit rose 2 percent from a year ago, but the company fell short of Wall Street expectations as it spent heavily to restructure outside the U.S. GM rode record North American earnings to a profit of \$913 million, or 57 cents per share. That compares with \$892 million, or 54 cents per share, a year ago. Revenue rose 3 percent to \$40.5 billion. Excluding

one-time items, including a \$700 million charge to exit the Chevrolet brand in Europe, GM made 67 cents per share. But analysts polled by FactSet expected 88 cents on revenue of \$40.8 billion. New CEO Mary Barra said GM's restructuring actions will strengthen the company for the future. New Chief Financial Officer Chuck Stevens said Wall Street analysts "didn't comprehend that restructuring." Much of the restructuring costs were for employee sever-

ance expenses. For the full year, GM's earnings fell 22 percent to \$3.8 billion or \$2.38 per share. Without one-time items, including \$800 million in impairment charges, it earned \$3.18 per share. Before taxes and restructuring costs, the company said it made \$8.6 billion for the year, up \$700 million from last year. GM also announced that 48,500 U.S. hourly workers will get up to \$7,500 in profit-sharing checks. Shares fell 4 percent to \$33.83 in premarket trad-

ing. In North America, GM made \$1.9 billion in the quarter before taxes and a record \$7.5 billion pretax for the full year. Stevens said the company's four brands gained market share in retail sales to individual customers, and its transaction prices rose. The company recently has lost pickup truck sales to competitors Ford and Chrysler, which have raised discounts. But Stevens said GM will stick with its approach of selling cars and trucks on value rather than price. □

## Twenty-First Century Fox 2Q profit off 49%

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Twenty-First Century Fox said Thursday that its fiscal second-quarter net income dropped 49 percent, largely as a result of acquisition costs, but still matched Wall Street predictions. The media entertainment giant controlled by Rupert Murdoch also posted significantly higher-than-expected revenue, helped by its acquisition of a controlling stake in German satellite TV operator Sky Deutschland AG in January 2013.

As a result of that acquisition, revenue at the company's direct broadcast satellite TV division jumped 66 percent to \$1.52 billion. Meanwhile, revenue from its cable network programming increased 14 percent to \$2.96 billion, helped by other acquisitions and higher rates at TV stations in the U.S.

Revenue at the company's film division increased 7 percent to \$2.48 billion on better TV production results that stemmed from the syndication of the comedy series "Modern Family" and higher revenue from the drama "Homeland." But the division wasn't as profitable as it was a year ago, when its results were boosted by the theatrical and home viewing releases of popular movies.

For the quarter ended Dec. 31, Twenty-First Century Fox Inc. earned \$1.21 billion, or 53 cents per share, down from \$2.38 billion, or \$1.01 per share, in the same quarter the year before.

The recent quarter's results included expenses related to the company's acquisition of a controlling stake in Sky Deutschland AG in January 2013. Excluding one-time items, the company posted an adjusted profit of 33 cents per share.

Revenue rose 15 percent, to \$8.16 billion from \$7.11 billion. Analysts, on average, expected a profit of 33 cents per share on \$7.87 billion in revenue, according to FactSet. The results marked Twenty-First Century Fox's second quarter as a separate entity from publishing company News Corp., which was spun off at the end of June 2013. □

## US stocks rise; Dow has its best day of 2014

**ALEX VEIGA**  
**AP Business Writer**

After a rocky start to the week, U.S. stocks roared back on Thursday, giving major stock indexes their biggest gain of the year. The Dow Jones industrial average and the S&P 500 index each closed up 1.2 percent, their largest single-day increase since Dec. 18.

The rally helped the mar-

jumped 188.30 points, or 1.2 percent, to close at 15,628.53. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 21.79 points, also 1.2 percent, to 1,773.43. Both indexes were still down about half a percent for the week following a steep drop on Monday. The Nasdaq composite gained 45 points, or 1.1 percent, to 4,057.12.

Thursday's surge began overseas, where the Euro-

That report, combined with a private survey on U.S. hiring released Wednesday, appeared to bolster investors' confidence that the government will issue a positive January jobs report on Friday.

"Those two numbers combined ... suggest that perhaps tomorrow's numbers might look a little stronger," Russell said.

All week, investors have

of weaker global growth emerged.

Those concerns were seen by some other investors as a buying opportunity.

"The fear in the markets has subsided some," said Marc Doss, regional chief investment officer at Wells Fargo Private Bank.

Thursday's gains were broad. All 10 of the S&P 500's sectors rose. Three stocks rose for every one that fell.

Stock buyers got going early on, reacting to better-than-expected earnings late Wednesday from The Walt Disney Co. The media giant got a lift from its movie hit "Frozen" and sales of the "Disney Infinity" video game. The stock rose \$3.80, or 5.3 percent, to \$75.56. Akamai Technologies led the gainers in the S&P 500 index after the online content delivery company allayed fears that it had lost Apple as a customer. Akamai soared \$9.76, or 20.6 percent, to \$57.18. Among the other big risers were construction industry supplier Vulcan Materials, which added \$5.47, or 9.1 percent, to \$65.66, and O'Reilly Automotive, which rose \$12.16, or 9 percent, to \$146.72. Investors also cheered Dunkin' Brands Group, which reported that more people visited stores owned by the chain restaurant in the last quarter and spent more there once they got inside. The stock added \$1.59, or 3.4 percent, to \$48.89. Other stocks didn't fare as well. □



**Trader Robert Moran, center, works with specialist Gennaro Saporito, foreground, on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. After a rocky start to the week, U.S. stocks roared back on Thursday, giving major stock indexes their biggest gain of the year.**

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

ket rebound a day after a modest loss and continued a gradual comeback since a plunge of more than 2 percent on Monday.

"The market was very oversold going into the day's trading," said Jim Russell, senior equity strategist at U.S. Bank Wealth Management. The Dow Jones industrial average

pean Central Bank decided not to cut interest rates. The move propelled major European stock indexes sharply higher.

Then the markets got a dose of good news on the U.S. job market. The Labor Department reported that fewer people applied for unemployment benefits last week.

been looking ahead to the employment survey and what it will augur for the economy.

Evidence of healthy U.S. job growth would suggest that the world's biggest economy is still expanding at a solid pace. That would comfort investors, many of whom became uneasy in recent weeks after signs



## Twitter stock sinks on user growth woes

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Twitter's stock is sinking on worries that the short online messaging service is not popular enough. Twitter Inc. had reported stronger-than-expected revenue and adjusted earnings in its fourth-quarter financial report Wednesday, its first as a publicly traded company. But its user numbers signaled that growth is slowing. Twitter had 241 million users at the end of 2013. The company added just 9 million new monthly users in the fourth quarter, only 1 million of which came from the U.S. It was adding an average of 16 million new accounts in each of the first three quarters of the year. Another closely watched metric, which measures how engaged users are with Twitter, declined during the quarter, further spooking investors. Twitter said its "time-line views," or how many times users refresh Twitter feeds, visit Twitter or look at search results, declined 7 percent from the previous quarter, to 148 billion from 159 billion. CEO Dick Costolo sought to reassure analysts and investors during Wednesday's conference call, saying that changes Twitter made to the short messaging service during the fourth quarter are starting to pay off. But the concerns remained. Sterne Agee analyst Arvind Bhatia cut his rating on Twitter's stock to "Underperform" from "Neutral" because of the slowing growth. He also said its stock is expensive compared to similar companies. He set a target price of \$43 for Twitter's stock. This is still more expensive than Facebook and LinkedIn, based on expected revenue for the companies, the analyst wrote in a note to investors. San Francisco-based Twitter's stock had soared following its November initial public offering, causing many analysts to call it too expensive. □

## Philip Morris Int'l 4Q profit falls 5 percent

**M. FELBERBAUM**

**AP Tobacco Writer**

**RICHMOND, Virginia (AP)**

— Philip Morris International Inc. said Thursday its fourth-quarter profit dropped 5 percent as cigarette sales fell in most of its markets despite commanding higher prices. The seller of Marlboro and other cigarette brands overseas also was hurt by foreign exchange rates for the U.S. dollar, but it adjusted results that were in line with Wall Street expectations. Smokers face tax increases, bans, health concerns and social stigma worldwide, but the effect of those on cigarette demand generally is less stark outside the United States. Philip Morris International has compensated for volume declines by raising prices and cutting costs. The company earned \$1.99 billion, or \$1.24 per share, in the period ended Dec. 31, down from \$2.1 billion, or \$1.25 per share, the year before. On an adjusted basis, it earned \$1.37 per share, beating Wall Street estimates by a penny, according to FactSet. Excluding excise taxes, revenue fell about 1 percent

to \$7.8 billion, matching analysts' prediction. It shares rose \$1.67, or about 2 percent, to \$78.57 in morning trading. Cigarette shipments fell about 4 percent to 223.2 billion cigarettes. Total Marlboro volumes fell nearly 1 percent to 74.8 billion cigarettes. Economic woes in the Euro-

pean Union and increased excise taxes drove shipments down about 5 percent during the quarter. Shipments fell 1.2 percent in the company's region that encompasses Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Shipments grew 4 percent in Latin America and Canada. In Asia, one of its largest

growth areas, the company said that cigarette volume fell more than 9 percent with gains in Indonesia offset by declines in Japan, Korea and the Philippines. Shipments in the Philippines fell 26 percent during the quarter, hurt by a large tax increase last year and a surge in non-taxed cigarettes. □



Marlboro cigarettes on display at a market in Palo Alto, Calif. Philip Morris International Inc. said Thursday its fourth-quarter profit dropped 5 percent as cigarette sales fell in most of its markets despite commanding higher prices.

(AP Photo/Paul Sakuma)

## Sanofi earns soar on lower restructuring costs

**PARIS (AP)** — French drug maker Sanofi said Thursday its earnings soared in the fourth quarter as lower restructuring costs offset a hefty charge related to one of its key multiple sclerosis treatments. Paris-based Sanofi reported net profit of 1.06 billion euros (\$1.4 billion) in the fourth quarter, up from 388 million euros a year earlier. Last year's profit was hammered by over 800 million euros worth of restructuring costs. Sanofi said it took a 612-million-euro charge in the quarter to account for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's December ruling that multiple sclerosis treatment Lemtrada is not ready for approval for the American market. Sanofi said it will miss a targeted March

date for U.S. approval of the drug. Earnings by Sanofi's preferred measure of profits — what it calls business earnings per share at constant exchange rates — fell 9.8 percent last year. The company forecast growth by this measure of between four and seven percent this year, "barring major unforeseen adverse events." Sanofi wants to market Lemtrada as a treatment for relapsing multiple sclerosis, a disease in which the immune system attacks healthy nerves. It can cause pain, numbness, slurred speech, impaired vision, muscle weakness and neurological problems. The drug was approved by the European Medicines Agency for use in the EU last year, and has also

been approved in Canada and Australia. The FDA said Sanofi and its Genzyme subsidiary had not submitted sufficient evidence to

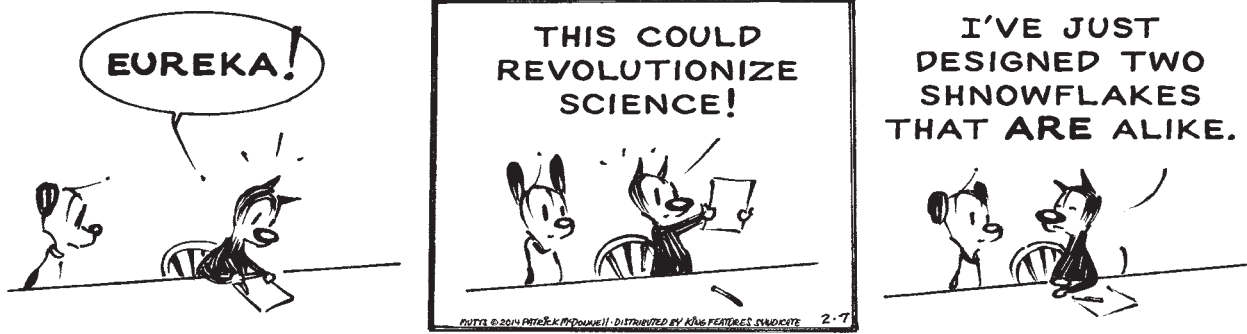
show the benefits of Lemtrada. Sanofi said that Genzyme is preparing its appeal to the agency. □

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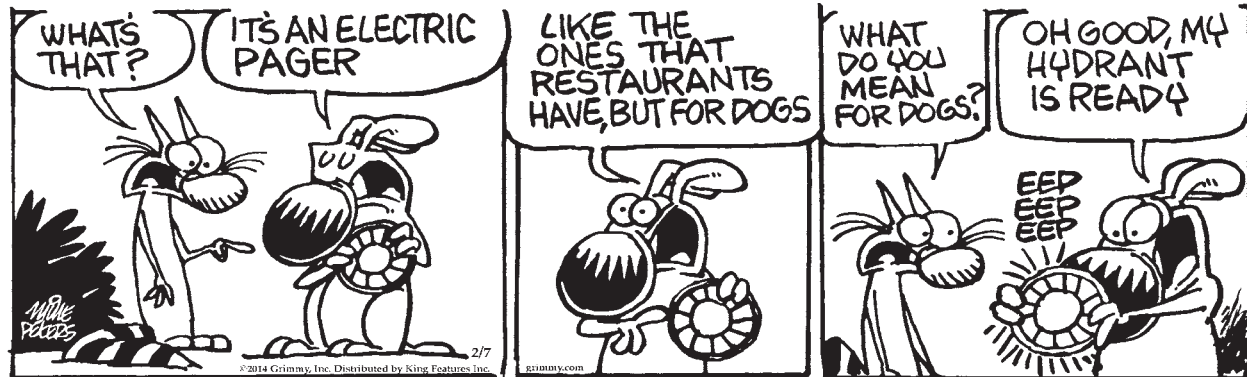
6 Chix



Blondie



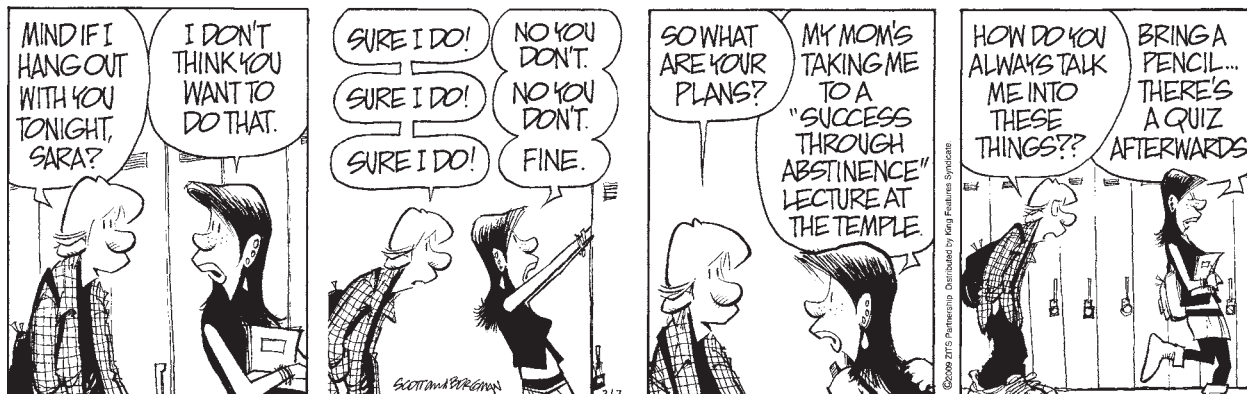
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

2	8				6			5
						6		1
	7		4					
6			9		2	8		
		7	3		4			9
					3		1	
8		3						
1			8				5	4

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

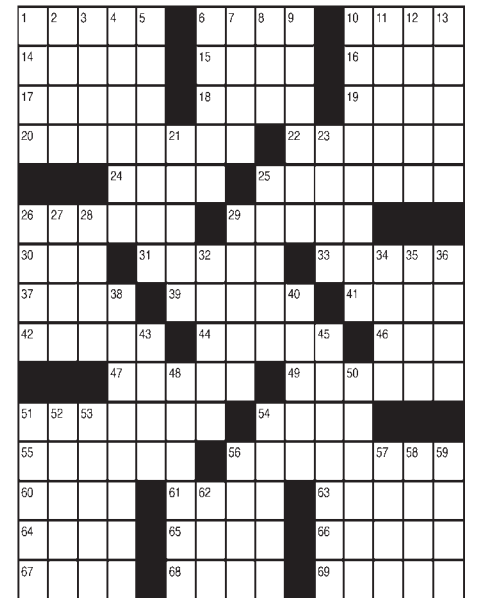
2/07

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

5	8	9	1	3	4	7	6	2
3	4	2	7	6	8	5	9	1
1	7	6	9	5	2	4	3	8
8	3	5	4	2	9	1	7	6
6	9	7	5	8	1	2	4	3
2	1	4	6	7	3	8	5	9
7	2	8	3	4	6	9	1	5
4	6	1	2	9	5	3	8	7
9	5	3	8	1	7	6	2	4

ACROSS

- 1 Sources of light in a house  
6 Journey  
10 Dad  
14 In the know  
15 Tiny amount  
16 Eras  
17 Lowest point  
18 Departs  
19 Gather a harvest  
20 Vision  
22 In a \_\_; mesmerized  
24 Comedian Sahl  
25 Make camp  
26 Go after  
29 Actress Greta  
30 Fourth-largest nation; abbr.  
31 Sword with a curved blade  
33 Closes noisily  
37 Semester or quarter  
39 Uptight  
41 Hit flies  
42 Special goody  
44 Phys. therapy  
46 Actor Wallach  
47 Sits on eggs  
49 Silent plane  
51 Feels miffed about  
54 Lowly laborer  
55 Fly a plane  
56 Bloodsucker  
60 Is unable to  
61 Heroic poem  
63 Leg bone  
64 Trim a lawn's border  
65 Evans or Robertson  
66 King's decree  
67 \_\_ meat; venison  
68 Snow vehicle  
69 Classroom furnishings
- DOWN  
1 "Penny \_\_"; Beatles song  
2 Take \_\_; subtract  
3 Manufactured



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

27/14

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

4	Light-refracting crystals	HUMS	AHEAD	STAB
5	No-nonsense	ATOP	SUAVE	CEDE
6	Sit __; stay where you are	TALE	PETAL	HAZE
7	Cheer loudly	SHEAVES	LABORER	
8	Suffix for quartz or meteor		KIN	LOYAL
9	Parish leader	ASSES	PIN	SABOT
10	Umbrellas	SLUR	YET	VIRILE
11	Representative	HAS	RENEWAL	DIP
12	"Shalom!"	ECHOES	RAN	LEVI
13	Colorado resort	SKIFF	CAN	LINED
21	Magnificent		FERAL	GAB
23	BBQ favorites	SEVERED	FEDERAL	
25	Wetland	MAIN	EDDIE	RARE
26	Play miniature golf	URNS	LIARS	ACME
27	__-friendly; easy to operate	GLEE	SENSE	LESS

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27/14

- 40 Rarin' to go  
43 Camp shelter  
45 Swollen  
48 Spirited horses  
50 \_\_-the-park home run; rare four-bagger  
51 Ran fast  
52 Steer clear of
- 53 Scorch  
54 \_\_ oneself; worked steadily  
56 Stack  
57 Heron's cousin  
58 Transmitter of Lyme disease  
59 Gobbles up  
62 Buddy



## Yogurt destined for Sochi Olympics hits import snag

**MARY ESCH**  
Associated Press

**ALBANY, New York (AP)** — American athletes in Sochi are facing breakfast without their team-sponsoring Greek yogurt, thanks to a bureaucratic web of international trade negotiations.

Team USA sponsor Chobani, which is based in upstate New York, says it has 5,000 cups of Greek yogurt sitting in a refrigerated warehouse waiting to be flown to the Olympic village. But Russian authorities say the U.S.

U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer, a New York Democrat and a big booster of the state's burgeoning Greek yogurt industry, this week implored the Russians to snip the red tape and let the shipment through. He said export trade rules should have nothing to do with it, since the yogurt isn't for sale and is to be eaten only by U.S. citizens in Sochi.

"Chobani yogurt is safe, nutritious and delicious, and the Russian authorities should get past 'nyet' and let this prime sponsor of the U.S. Olympic team deliver their protein-packed food to our athletes and media workers," Schumer said in a statement Tuesday.

As of Thursday, the situation remained at an impasse.

The Russian Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance put out a statement saying U.S. authorities had failed to provide a veterinary certificate that is required by Russia and other members of the Customs Union, an economic grouping that also includes Belarus and Kazakhstan.

"The presence of such certificate accompanying each shipment of imported products is required by Russian law," it said. "For milk and dairy products ... it's Certificate No. 28."

The Russian agency said U.S. officials refused to use the certificate for the shipment to Sochi, saying such a move could have a negative impact on future trade talks. □



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OV -\$42k  
Plat Plus NY 52 OV- \$49k  
GOLD Season  
OS \$10k OV \$9500  
Oceanfront \$17k  
3 BEDRM OV \$17,000

### Marriott Aruba Ocean Club

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Oceanfront PLAT \$29k  
Platinum 1B OV \$11,500  
Gold season 2B OV \$9,000  
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# Water shortage in California town stokes fears

By JASON DEAREN

Associated Press

**WILLITS, Calif. (AP)** -- In this small logging town in Northern California's redwood country, small blue signs urging water conservation are almost everywhere you look.

Just south of Willits, in one of the state's most verdant corners, crows and other birds peck at dry ground that should be covered in water at the city's Centennial Reservoir, which is less than a third full. The creek that feeds it has slowed to a trickle.

"It's common at this time of year for the water to be going over the cement wall right here. In fact, we'd be standing in water," said Bruce Burton, a Willits city councilman, gesturing toward the small cement dam in the creek. "In the 20 years I've been in local government, we've never experienced this kind of condition."

Though some rain was falling Thursday and predicted to last through the weekend in the north and central parts of the state, California remains in the midst of an historic drought. The state's Department of Public Health says 17 rural areas including Willits - a town of about 5,000 people that usually sees about 50 inches of rain a year - are dangerously low on water, and officials expect that number to grow.

In addition to declaring a drought emergency, California has canceled water deliveries beginning in the spring from the state's water system to farms and thirsty cities and shut down fishing in dozens of streams to protect imperiled salmon and steelhead.

The emergency has be-



**In this photo taken Tuesday, Feb. 4, 2014, a warning buoy sits on the dry, cracked bed of Lake Mendocino near Ukiah, Calif. Despite recent spot rains the reservoir is currently only about 37 percent full. California remains in the midst of an historic drought causing Gov. Jerry Brown to declare a state of emergency.**

come a disruption to everyday life in Willits, a Mendocino County locale known as the final resting place of the racehorse Seabiscuit. City leaders have banned lawn watering and car washing, mandated all residents cut water use dramatically and asked restaurants to serve the precious resource only upon request and to conserve, such as by using paper plates.

Adrienne Moore, Willits city manager, said some relief is expected from the current storm.

"But we would need several similar storms to really pull us out of this drought crisis," he said.

While California sees cycles of drought normally, scientists say the dry weather since Oct. 1 appears to be unique in its severity.

"According to tree ring records, this water year, which began Oct. 1, really stands out as one of the worst single years in the last 500 years," said Lynn Ingram, author of "The West

Without Water" and a University of California earth science professor.

"This year, the drought is impacting places more than we've ever seen, at least that I've come across in my research," she added.

Of the 17 water-starved rural agencies, three are in rainy Mendocino County and are districts that rely largely on rainwater to fill their reservoirs. Other areas include parts of Fresno, Kern and Santa Cruz coun-

ties.

After a record dry 2013, Mendocino County leaders were the first in California to declare a drought emergency, which they did on Jan. 7.

Things are so scarce that the sheriff's office is on alert for water bandits. During the 2009-10 drought, authorities caught thieves pumping water from Lake Mendocino into trucks. The reservoir is currently about 37 percent full, according

to county officials.

"Water theft is a big concern, so we're doing public announcements and have a line to call for reports to the Sheriff's Department," said Carre Brown, a Mendocino County supervisor. "All deputies are on the watch."

Unlike many of the other communities facing water woes, Willits doesn't have readily accessible groundwater.

Officials are racing to develop two groundwater wells within city limits, but the water in both sources is polluted by naturally occurring arsenic and other minerals, so the city needs an expensive treatment facility to make it potable. The state public health department is testing the water to help determine what kind of treatment is needed.

Ron Owens, a spokesman for the state public health department, said officials are helping struggling towns like Willits identify other water options, like connecting with other water systems if need be. It also has some emergency funding available. □

## National lab scolded for Lusitania experiment

**SAN FRANCISCO (AP)** — A U.S. watchdog agency reprimanded a national lab in California for spending more than \$80,000 in American taxpayer money to help National Geographic with a documentary film about the sinking of the ship Lusitania just before World War I.

Nearly 2,000 people died when a German torpedo sunk the ocean liner in 1915. The incident spurred the United States to declare war.

National Geographic's production team wanted to recreate the explosives that might have gone off aboard the Lusitania, and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory spokes-

woman Lynda Seaver said no other facility could do that modeling work.

"NatGeo approached this Lab because of its expertise," she said in an email. "There's no other facility that can do the modeling and simulation we do."

The Energy Department's inspector general said in a report issued last week that improperly used its licensing and royalty fees to perform tests for the documentary and should not have done the work.

Seaver said lab officials believe they followed correct procedures in the explosives-related work it performed for "The Dark Secrets of the Lusitania." The Energy Department has un-

til early May to determine any sanctions.

The Office of Inspector General has recommended that the lab make changes to improve transparency and management of similar outside contracts going forward.

"Federal officials responsible for oversight of contractor activities in this area told us that they knew of the documentary and were concerned that it was an inappropriate use of LLNL's resources," the report said. "Those officials, however, took no action."

National Geographic did not immediately respond to an email and message seeking comment Thursday. □

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# Smithsonian explores 'cool' from Whitman to Jay-Z

**BRETT ZONGKER**  
**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Flashback to a 1940s jazz club. A saxophonist performs on stage wearing his sunglasses at night. "I'm cool," he says, relaxed in the moment.

Lester Young, the lead saxophonist in Count Basie's orchestra and soul mate to Billie Holiday, was giving voice to what would become an American and global obsession for cool with a phrase rooted in jazz slang. But what does it mean to say someone is cool? Over the past five years, curators at the National Portrait Gallery set out to examine how that idea of cool has shaped American culture.

A new exhibit opening Friday gives the concept an entertaining yet scholarly treatment with 100 photographs of people who defined cool as a word for rebellion, self-expression, charisma, edge and mystery.

"American Cool" traces the idea further back to the "granddaddies of cool," poet Walt Whitman and social reformer Frederick Douglass, and unfolds through the generations, leading to Jay-Z, Johnny Depp and Madonna.

"These are the successful cultural rebels of American culture," said Joel Dinerstein, a professor and jazz scholar at Tulane University who co-curated the show and teaches a college

course on the history of being cool.

The exhibit idea was born out of the 2008 presidential election when the buzz was about a new type of political candidate who exuded a cool, relaxed intensity, appealing to a new generation, said co-curator Frank Goodyear III, who is co-director of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art in Maine.

No presidents past or present fit the criteria for defining cool, though curators considered Obama, Clinton, Reagan and Kennedy. What might seem like an arbitrary list of 100 celebrities was actually a much-debated roster whittled down from 500 names, the curators said. They devised a four-point rubric to define cool on a national scale. To be included, a person had to have an original artistic vision with a signature style, represent cultural rebellion or transgression, have instant visual recognition, and have a recognized and lasting cultural legacy. The 100 who made the cut include musicians, actors, athletes, comedians, activists and writers. At the roots of cool, there's Fred Astaire, Ernest Hemingway and Georgia O'Keeffe, followed by the birth of cool in the jazz era with Young, Holiday, Muddy Waters and Duke Ellington, as well as Audrey Hepburn, Elvis Presley and Frank Sinatra. Music from 10 jazz, blues and rock-and-roll artists



This handout photo provided by the National Portrait Gallery, taken in 1956, shows Frank Sinatra, by Herman Leonard. Curators at the National Portrait Gallery want to know what it means to be cool. This handout photo provided by the National Portrait Gallery, taken in 1956, shows Frank Sinatra, by Herman Leonard. Curators at the National Portrait Gallery want to know what it means to be cool.

**Associated Press**

plays throughout the galleries.

In the 1960s and 1970s, cool was tied to the counter-culture. To be cool was to be anti-authoritarian and open to new ideas, curators said, with figures like Bob Dylan, Muhammad Ali, Angela Davis and Andy Warhol.

Throughout the show, there are more men than women represented.

"Cool was very much a masculine aesthetic until very recently," Dinerstein said. "This notion of sort of having edge and charisma and mystery and detachment really was not ap-

plied to women, except in negative ways, for quite a while. The cross-over period for that is in a lot of ways the '70s."

It's an exhibit about history, race, gender and integration. And it's about photography as the figures each shaped their public images through photographs by Richard Avedon, Annie Leibovitz and other leading fine art photographers and photojournalists. Most of the images are black and white.

The most difficult section to curate was the legacy of cool from the 1980s onward, Goodyear said.

"There are some who thought that cool died in the '80s," Goodyear said. "It was Reagan's America and increasing materialism and the growth of sort of corporate power and its influence."

Being cool was more important than being rich in the decades before. But more recently being cool has been validated by being rich. Someone like Jay-Z is "selling in" to have more power in the culture, rather than selling out, Dinerstein said. "Hip-hop totally crosses that over in which bling becomes positive," he said. □

## Lorde to headline Preakness concert in Baltimore

**BALTIMORE (AP)** — Lorde will bring her Grammy Award-winning song of the year to Baltimore as she

**The Maryland Jockey Club announced Thursday Feb. 6, 2014 that Lorde will bring her Grammy Award-winning song of the year to Maryland as she headlines the Preakness infield concert at Pimlico Race Course in May.**

**Associated Press**

headlines the Preakness infield concert at Pimlico Race Course in May.

The Maryland Jockey Club is announcing Thursday that the 17-year-old breakout star from New Zealand will perform an extended set during the infield festival May 17 at the 139th Preakness Stakes.

Lorde won Grammy Awards last month for song of the year and best pop

solo performance for her No. 1 single "Royals." She also received nominations for record of the year and best pop vocal album for her debut album "Pure Heroine."

Headliners in recent years at the Preakness have included Macklemore & Ryan Lewis, Maroon 5, and Bruno Mars. A second stage also will feature other live music. □





# Brangelina wine sequel called 'mouthwatering



A bottle of Miraval 2013 is pictured in Paris, Friday, Jan.31, 2014. Associated Press

**GREG KELLER**  
Associated Press

**PARIS (AP)** — The latest Brad Pitt-Angelina Jolie sequel is being described as powerful and elegant with a "mouth-watering finish."

These raves don't appear in movie publications — they're from Decanter magazine's review of the celebrity couple's second vintage of rose wine produced at their French Provencal estate, Chateau Miraval.

The 2013 Miraval goes on sale online Friday and will be in shops and restaurants around the world next month. Decanter describes the Cotes de Provence rose as "charmingly pretty in color" with "a delicate structure that deepens through the palate."

The 2012 vintage, Pitt's and Jolie's first since buying the 500-hectare (1,200 acre) estate, was the highest-ranked rose on Wine Spectator's annual Top 100 wines list.

Around 200,000 bottles of the '13 will be sold for around 15 euros (\$20) each. □

## 'Drunken Botanist' author now writing fiction

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Best-selling "The Drunken Botanist" author Amy Stewart is now writing novels.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt announced Thursday that Stewart will write a series of fiction books based on the real life of Constance Kopp, a female deputy sheriff in early 20th-century New Jersey. The first novel, "Girl Waits With a Gun," is scheduled for 2015.

The publisher says Stewart learned of Kopp while researching "The Drunken Botanist," a history of the natural sources of alcoholic drinks that came out last year.

Stewart's other books include "From the Ground Up," "Wicked Bugs" and "Flower Confidential." □



In this April 23, 2009 file photo, Alice Walker stands in front of a picture of herself from 1974 as she tours her archives at Emory University, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

# Alice Walker featured in television documentary

**HILLEL ITALIE**  
AP National Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Alice Walker, who turns 70 later this month, is thinking about her legacy.

Over the past few years, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author has donated her papers to Emory University, permitted "The Color Purple" to be released as an e-book and reached a deal with Simon & Schuster to publish excerpts from journals she has kept for decades. Walker also participated in the documentary "Alice Walker: Beauty in Truth," scheduled to air Friday night on PBS stations as part of the "American Masters" series.

"I don't have this feeling that 70 is really old," says Walker, who notes one ancestor lived to 125. "But I do feel it's helpful if you're thinking about the coming generations to leave your work in a form that people can relate to."

Interviewed recently by telephone, Walker said one reason she agreed to appear in the film is because the director, Pratibha Parmar, is a friend.

Parmar, also interviewed recently, said she was inspired to make the documentary a few years ago after viewing DVDs of other "American Masters" projects.

"It seemed crazy not to have a film on Alice, given the impact she's had with her life and her writing," said Parmar, who in the 1990s worked with Walker on the film and book "Warrior Marks," about female genital mutilation in Africa. As "masters" go, Walker is hardly an austere, Olympian figure. A longtime feminist and political activist, she has been denounced for not allowing "The Color Purple" to be translated into Hebrew (in protest of Israel's treatment of Palestinians) and accused of demeaning black men in "The Color Purple," but celebrated for fighting racism and sexism and writing candidly about abortion, incest and domestic violence.

The film closely tracks Walker's childhood on a former Georgia plantation, when money was so scarce her

mother lined her own bedroom with paper bags; her years as a scholarship student at Spelman College; her brief marriage to the Jewish civil rights activist Melvyn Leventhal ("We were prepared to die," she says in the film); and her long and diverse career as an author.

Walker has written more than 20 books, including poetry, essays, short stories and the novels "The Third Life of Grange Copeland," inspired in part by the lives of her parents, and "Meridian," based on Walker's years in the civil rights movement. But she's best known for "The Color Purple," a 1982 novel for which she drew upon family stories to tell of a young girl in rural Georgia and her struggle for independence after being raped by her father and beaten by her husband. The book and film adaptation, which came out three years later, led to such harsh and prolonged protests about the portrayal of black men that Walker later wrote a book about it. □



## Delusions Of Failure



**PAUL KRUGMAN**  
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The Republican response to the State of the Union address was delivered by Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, R-Wash. - and it was remarkable for its lack of content. A bit of uplifting personal biography, a check list of good things her party wants to happen with no hint of how it plans to make them happen. The closest she came to substance was when she described a constituent, "Bette in Spokane," who supposedly faced a \$700-a-month premium hike after her health insurance policy was canceled. "This law is not working," intoned McMorris Rodgers. And right there we see a perfect illustration of just how Republicans are trying to deceive voters - and are, in the process, deceiving themselves. I'll get back to "Bette in Spokane" in a minute, but first, is Obamacare "not working"? Everyone knows about the disastrous rollout, but that was months ago. Since then, health reform has been steadily making up lost ground. At this point enrollments in the health exchanges are only about 1 million below Congressional Budget Office projections, and rising faster than projected. So a best guess is that by the time 2014 enrollment closes on March 31, there will be more than 6 million Americans signed up through the exchanges, versus 7 million projected. Sign-ups might even meet the projection. But isn't Obamacare in a "death spiral," in which only the old and sick are signing up, so that premiums will soon soar? Not according to the people who should know - the insurance companies. True, one company, Humana, says the risk pool is worse than it expected. But others, including WellPoint and Aetna, are optimistic (which isn't a contradiction: different companies could be having different experiences). And the Kaiser Family Foundation, which has run the numbers, finds that even a bad risk pool would have only a minor effect on premiums. Now, some, perhaps many, of those signing up on the exchanges aren't newly insured; they're replacing their existing policies, either voluntarily or because those policies didn't meet the law's standards. But those standards are there for

a reason - the same reason health insurance is now mandatory. Health reform won't work if people go uninsured, then sign up when they get sick. It also can't work if healthy people only buy fig-leaf insurance, which offers hardly any coverage.

And what this means, in turn, is that while we don't know yet how many people will be newly insured under reform, we do know that even those who already had insurance are, on average, getting much better insurance. Since the goal of health reform was to make Americans more secure - to reduce their risk of being unable to afford needed health care, or of facing financial ruin if they get sick - the law is doing its job. Which brings me back to Bette in Spokane. Bette's tale had policy wonks scratching their heads; it was hard to see, given what we know about premiums and how the health law works, how anyone could face that large a rate increase. Sure enough, when a local newspaper, The Spokesman-Review, contacted Bette Grenier, it discovered that the real story was very different from the image McMorris Rodgers conveyed. First of all, she was comparing her previous policy with one of the pricier alternatives her insurance company was offering - and she refused to look for cheaper alternatives on the Washington insurance exchange, declaring, "I wouldn't go on that Obama website." Even more important, all Grenier and her husband had before was a minimalist insurance plan, with a \$10,000 deductible, offering very little financial protection. So yes, the new law requires that they spend more, but they would get far better coverage in return.

So was this the best story McMorris Rodgers could come up with? The answer, probably, is yes, since just about every tale of health reform horror the GOP has tried to peddle has similarly fallen apart once the details were revealed. The truth is that the campaign against Obamacare relies on misleading stories at best, and often on outright deceit.

Who pays the price for this deceit? In many cases, American families. Although health care enrollment is actually going pretty well at this point, thousands and maybe millions of Americans have failed to sign up for coverage because they believe the false horror stories they keep hearing.

But conservative politicians aren't just deceiving their constituents; they're also deceiving themselves. Right now, Republican political strategy seems to be to stall on every issue, and reap the rewards from Obamacare's inevitable collapse. Well, Obamacare isn't collapsing - it's recovering pretty well from a terrible start. And by the time that reality sinks in on the right, health reform will be irreversible. □



## Love, Death And Sochi



**FRANK BRUNI**  
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There are few moments sweeter, more humbling or more thrilling than telling someone you love how you feel. As soon as Roger Mbede did that, he was damned. This happened in Cameroon, which, like many African countries, treats homosexuality as if it were a curse, a scourge. He lost sight of that and made the mistake of sending several text messages that were too candid, too trusting.

"I'm very much in love with you," one of them said, and the man who got it, apparently worried that he was being set up, turned Roger in.

Law enforcement officers scrutinized all of his correspondence for suggestions of sexual activity with people of the same gender, which can lead to a prison sentence of five years.

One of his lawyers, Alice Nkom, told me that they also made him strip so that they could examine his anus, as if the ultimate proof would be there. This isn't unusual in such interrogations, she said, and it was just the start of his degradation after his March 2011 arrest. The end came last month, when he died at 34. I'll come back to that. But first, the reason I'm sharing his story. On Thursday the Olympics begin. Worldwide attention will turn to Sochi, Russia, and there will be a spike in commentary

about Russia's dangerously homophobic climate, which has already prompted discussion and protest.

But while this will be an important reminder of the kind of persecution that LGBT people endure in a country openly hostile to them, it will also be an incomplete one. Russia's hardly the worst.

Although it has an easily abused and utterly ridiculous law against so-called gay propaganda, it doesn't technically criminalize same-sex activity. About 75 other countries do, and by the laws or customs of Iran, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Mauritania, Sudan and certain parts of Nigeria and Somalia, such activity is even punishable by death. Gays, it turns out, are handy scapegoats, distracting people from the grave problems that really hold them back. In Nigeria, the president signed new legislation last month that establishes 14-year prison sentences for anyone who enters into a same-sex union and 10-year sentences for people who publicly display same-sex affection or who simply participate in gay groups. There have since been accounts of gay people being rounded up. A man in northern Nigeria was publicly whipped for having had sex with another man seven years earlier. A BBC reporter described how the man screamed during the 20 lashes.

LGBT people in Jamaica live in fear, despite a fresh, hopeful push by some Jamaicans to repeal a law that permits long prison sentences for sodomy. Mobs there have chased people believed to be gay, and last year a transgendered teen was reportedly killed - stabbed, shot and run over with a car - in a hate crime.

Strains of Russia's florid bigotry can be found in its neighbors, too: Lithuania, Latvia, Moldova, Ukraine. Ty Cobb, the director of global engagement for the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, which is about to publish a world report, noted

that many traditionalists in these countries cast LGBT people as the emblems and agents of a decadent Western culture.

Human Rights Watch recently examined Kyrgyzstan and found that while the country doesn't criminalize same-sex activity, the police there detain, taunt and shame gay men routinely and with impunity.

The group also investigated Cameroon, where it says a gay rights activist was killed last summer after being tortured with a hot iron. Over the last three years, according to the group, at least 28 people in Cameroon have been prosecuted for homosexual conduct.

Two men were hauled in for questioning because lubricant and condoms had been found in their house. Another two men aroused suspicion because of their feminine dress and beverage choice. They drank Baileys Irish Cream.

Nkom was involved in their case, as she was with Roger, whose story she and another of his lawyers, Michel Togue, fleshed out for me.

In prison, where he spent more than a year, he was apparently roughed up. Raped, too. He got sick, and while news reports mentioned a hernia, Nkom told me he also had testicular cancer. He didn't get proper treatment, she said, not even after his release, partly because he went into hiding, terrified of being put away again.

His relatives didn't intervene in his medical care. They spurned him, she said, contributing to the isolation that hastened his deterioration.

Back before the text message, back before the dread label of homosexual was hung on him, Roger had confidence. He had respect. He studied philosophy at a local university, with an eye on a teaching career.

"He was the hope of the family," Nkom told me. "He was the one who had a future."

Then he shared what was in his heart. And that future was gone. □



# GI Joe, The World's First Action Figure, Now 50 Years Old

**CHRIS CAROLA**

**Associated Press**

**SARATOGA SPRINGS, New York (AP)** — G.I. Joe is turning 50.

The birthday of what's called the world's first action figure is being celebrated this month by collectors and the toy maker that introduced it just before the nation plunged into the quagmire that would become the Vietnam War — a storm it seems to have weathered pretty well.

Since Hasbro brought it to the world's attention at the annual toy fair in New York City in early 1964, G.I. Joe has undergone many changes, some the result of shifts in public sentiment for military-themed toys, others dictated by the marketplace.

Still, whether it's the original "movable fighting man" decked out in the uniforms of the four branches of the U.S. military, or today's scaled-down products, G.I. Joe remains a popular brand.

"Joe stood for everything that was meant to be good: fighting evil, doing what's right for people," said Alan Hassenfeld, the 65-year-old former CEO for Rhode Island-based Hasbro Inc., whose father, Merrill, oversaw G.I. Joe's development in 1963.

But it's Don Levine, then the company's head of research and development, who is often referred to as the "father" of G.I. Joe for shepherding the toy through design and development. Levine and his team came up with an 11.5-inch (300-millimeter) articulated figure with 21 moving parts, and since the company's employees included many military veterans, it was decided to outfit the toy in the uniforms of the Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force, with such accessories as guns, helmets and vehicles.

Levine, who served in the

Army in Korea, said he got the idea for the moveable figure as a way to honor veterans.

But he and his team knew the product wasn't in Hasbro's usual mold, and it took years of pitches before Merrill Hassenfeld gave it the company's full backing.

"Most boys in the '60s had a father or a relative who was or had been in the military," said Patricia Hogan, curator at The Strong National Museum of Play in Rochester, home to the National Toy Hall of Fame.

"Once you've bought Joe, you need to buy all the accessories and play sets and add-ons, which was great for business."

G.I. Joe hit the shelves in time for the 1964 Christmas shopping season and soon became a big seller at \$4 apiece.

It remained popular until the late 1960s, as opposition to Vietnam intensified and parents shied away from military-related toys. Hasbro countered in 1970 by introducing "Adventure Team" G.I. Joes that played down the military connection. Into the '70s, G.I. Joes featured "lifelike



**G.I. Joe action figures portray Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima in a display at the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.**  
(AP Photo/Mike Groll)

hair" and "kung-fu grip" and were outfitted with scuba gear to save the oceans and explorer's clothing for discovering mummies.

Hasbro discontinued production later that decade. In the early 1980s, Hasbro shrank Joe to 3.5 inches (90 millimeters), the same size as figures made popular by "Star Wars." It has stuck to that size, with the occasional issue of larger special editions.

Over the decades, G.I. Joe has spawned comic books, cartoons, two movies starring Channing Tatum, and a G.I. Joe

Collector's Club and its annual convention — GI-JoeCon — held in Dallas in April. But for many G.I. Joe fans of a certain age, the newer products hold no appeal.

"The 12-inch G.I. Joe built that company," said Tearle Ashby, of the New York village of Ballston Spa. "The stuff they put out now is garbage."

Ashby, a psychotherapist who turns 50 in June, played with G.I. Joes as a boy, but few survived, falling victim to encounters with firecrackers and little parachutes that failed to open.

"Casualties of war," said Ashby, who started collecting 12-inch G.I. Joes 20 years ago and now owns about 2,000.

On Saturday, he and other collectors plan to bring their 12-inch G.I. Joes to the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs to celebrate the 50th birthday.

The exact date of G.I. Joe's introduction remains hazy. Ashby and others, including Hasbro, believe it was in February 1964 — but American International Toy Fair organizers say it was held in March that year.

Hasbro said it intends to announce details of its 50th anniversary plans during this year's fair in New York on Feb. 16-19.

G.I. Joe was elected into Toy Hall of Fame in 2004, six years after Barbie was enshrined. Hogan said the hall doesn't have policies prohibiting toy weapons from induction, although all candidates must be deemed safe. The U.S. was in the early stages of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq a decade ago, so G.I. Joe's induction didn't meet the opposition it might have faced as the conflicts dragged on, Hogan said.

"I suspect," she said, "most people would have acknowledged that G.I. Joe really does belong in the Toy Hall of Fame." □



**A Gen. George Patton G.I. Joe action figure, right, and other G.I. Joes in a display at the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.**  
(AP Photo/Mike Groll)